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Dissertation

REALISTIC DESCRIPTIVE SETTING
IN ENGLISH FICTION FROM 1550 THROUGH FIELDING

by

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The Development of the Use of Realistic, Descriptive
Setting in English Narrative Prose Fiction
From 1550 Through Fielding

The development of the use of realistic setting in English prose fiction is slow, but perhaps no slower than the general development of integrated fictional technique. Indeed, it may well be contended that the extent and variety of the use of setting in any age is a direct index of the fictional skill of that age. It is certainly true that characterization and plot were greatly in advance of setting in their development; when, for instance, we reach the age of Fielding, we find that characterization, quite aptly developed in the pamphlet literature of the age of Elizabeth and in the seventeenth century, reaches a new high level; and that plotting, though more slow in its development, finds its first great master in Fielding; yet Fielding himself is, as we shall later see, little more than a hesitant pioneer, when judged by modern standards, in integrating setting with plot and characterization - an art that develops slowly, perhaps not reaching full maturity until modern times in such writers as Hardy and Conrad.

Realistic setting may be used in many ways to enhance the narrative of which it is a part. It may serve simply as a convincing background for action, providing enough mere probable detail or enough distinctive local color to lend an

appearance of truth to the narrative of which it is a part. It may go a little further and give a distinctive emotional tone to the actions whose background it is. More dynamically employed, parts of it may be utilized by the characters in the action, so that action and setting become inseparable; it may be used to mirror the action, either actually or symbolically; and it may become so vitalized that it will determine, or be the major determinant for, the action. Applied to characterization, it may merely form a background against which characters, by their actions, inter-actions and conversations, may reveal themselves. But it may also influence or completely determine the course of character growth. And at times it may mirror, symbolically, dominant traits of the character who has created it or who dwells in it. These are merely a few of the more simple and obvious uses of realistic setting. Hardy and Conrad and our great continental novelists have made of it a major force, if not the major force, in the novel; they have employed and intermixed the above-mentioned uses of setting, and have created artistic effects which produce a definite and intriguing challenge to critical analysis. In the following discussion, we shall trace the early development of the use of realistic setting, and reveal the simple beginnings of a now infinitely complex art.

But first it is desirable that the reader and the writer agree on the meaning of the term realistic as it is to be applied here. To any student of the novel it should be almost self-apparent that when one says, "This seems real to me" after reading a story, he implies the existence within that story of verisimilitude, a seeming trueness to life, and of his psychological acceptance of the probability that the story is life-like. And this is true of the component parts of the story (of plot, characterization, and setting) as well as of the story as a whole. Consequently, when we speak of realistic setting, we imply that that setting appears to the reader to be true-seeming, that to him it carries a strong probability of its being capable of existence in the world as constituted. We do not necessarily mean, however, that the setting is actual, that it already exists or has existed in reality. R.L. Stevenson has somewhere asserted that to carry the actual over into fiction is to court the disbelief of the reader. While this is not invariably, or even generally, true, it must be admitted that there are times when truth is stranger than fiction. If the truth is an exceptional truth, if it lies entirely outside the norm of human experience so that that experience cannot be used as a touchstone for its probability, that truth, incorporated into fiction, will seem to the reader to be untrue to life; and the realistic novelist may employ it only if he wishes to run the risk of losing the faith of the reader. This is one of

the pitfalls that the naturalist must ever guard against. The fact is, then, that to the reader of novels the actual is realistic only when there seem to be grounds in his own experience for the belief that it is probable. Consequently, in tracing the development of realistic setting, we shall point out the actual where it can be definitely identified, but we shall be concerned primarily with determining whether setting adds to the narrative a seeming trueness-to-life, and whether it is used to make plot and characterization more true-seeming. Possibility, moreover, cannot be regarded as satisfactory evidence of complete realism : the reader must be convinced that the setting is life-like, not merely conjecture that it may be so.

The setting of romances such as those of Sidney, Greene, and Lodge is, consequently, outside the scope of this discussion. The reader goes to them for a pleasurable escape from the chains of reality; he willingly suspends his disbelief and accepts the conventions of fancy, so that he may enter unimpeded into their realm. He expects, to be sure, that, once the conventions are agreed upon by author and reader, the author will maintain a plausible setting, a setting which seems superficially reasonable when made the base for the characters who move across it. But neither the author nor the reader expects that setting to seem true-to-life, any more than he insists that the characters and incidents of that romance shall conform to the norm of human existence.

I

THE PAMPHLETEERS TO 1600

In tracing the development of realistic narrative setting we may well begin with the Elizabethan pamphlet literature published before Nashe's Jack Wilton (1594). This literature, given an additional impetus by the Spanish picaresque tradition,¹ contains our earliest native English, prose-fictional realism. As A.V.Judges remarks, the pamphleteers were, more frequently than not, men who had been in personal contact with London rogues and their environment:

....most of them were men of experience. Copeland had walked the streets within his London ward, and doubtless served his turn as constable; Harmon had been on the commission of the peace in Kent, and his official dealings with his rowsey rakehells were many and varied; Greene, according to his own account, drifted into the society of London's underworld and learnt its tricks; Dekker found his natural playground as a youth in the streets and markets of the City; Fennor, though not himself a jail-bird, rubbed shoulders with the most unfortunate of his fellow beings while waiting release from a debtors' prison.

The primary purpose of this pamphlet literature was to appeal to the popular curiosity, to provide a vicarious experience with roguery, vice, and the terrors of the plague, to cater to the popular taste for thrills and forbidden fruit. Yet all the pamphleteers, following the lead of Walker and Harmon, offer the reader a moral sop to justify his appetite

¹ Lazarillo de Tormez (1554), the first of the Spanish picaresque tales, was not translated into English until 1576.

² Arthur V. Judges, The Elizabethan Underworld: xiv (London: Routledge and Sons, Ltd., 1930)

by labeling their works warnings against vice, practical educational lessons which will enable the reader to avoid being duped, or instigations to piety. Now the popular nature of this literature at once limits its artistic possibilities, for the popular taste demanded only curious detail and spicy illustrative story, and would have been just as unreceptive to, and unappreciative of, the artistic use of setting as is the average school-boy, business man, or house-wife of today. Consequently, though characterization developed quite rapidly because of the delight in ever-popular caricature, which permits us to laugh at others supposedly inferior to ourselves, setting developed very slowly, and was, indeed, practically (and often entirely) non-existent in pamphlet literature. When it first occurred, it did so (1) because it was essential to dramatic action to place certain properties in certain places in order to work out the narrative, or (2) because of the public curiosity concerning unfamiliar milieu. Indeed, these two uses of setting dominate fictional prose through Fielding and make for the minimization of extensive description of the locales of familiar every-day life, and for extremely infrequent existence of detailed setting used to motivate the formation of character moods, to symbolize or produce states of mind, or to supply the dynamic force in the causal formation of the action and interaction of characters (i.e.-motivation).

Gilbert Walker

The following passage by Gilbert Walker, written in 1552, illustrates well the latter of the two earliest tendencies in setting:

Soon after, we came to his house. The table was fair spread with diaper cloths; the cupboard garnished with much goodly plate.... [We were shown] through divers well-trimmed chambers, the worst of them apparelled with verdures, some with rich cloth of Arras, all with beds, chairs and cushions of silk and gold, of sundry colors, suitably wrought.¹

Here - and incidentally there is no other use of setting in Walker - the author makes an attempt to get reader interest by hinting at the unsuspected richness of atmosphere used by city gamblers to produce a background of gentility by which raw country courtiers may be lulled into a sense of security and so encouraged to gamble away their fortunes. The details are sufficiently concrete and familiar to add slightly to the probability of the accompanying narrative. However, no use is made of this setting beyond the characters' walking through it : there is no direct indication of their reaction to it.

Thomas Harmon

To find an example of the other tendency in the early use of setting - that where 'stage properties' are brought in because of narrative necessity - it is necessary to skip over Awdley's Fraternitye (1561) where the types of rogue

¹ Gilbert Walker, "Manifest Detectionion.. of Dice Play", in A.V.Judges' The Elizabethan Underworld, p.30

tricks are first described, and to come to the work of Thomas Harmon, whose catalogue of rogues and accompanying illustrative stories served as a basis for the literature of roguery, - Nashe, Greene, the unknown author of the Groundwork of Conny-Catching, and Dekker (to mention only a few) having lifted varying amounts of their material *totidem verbis* and without acknowledgement from Harmon, and having followed, in general, his method. Harmon, writing in 1566, was generally content merely to name locales, to mention general settings such as 'house', 'yard', 'bed', or to combine the two: "under my lodging at White Friars within the cloister, in a little yard or court"¹; "the back side of Clement's Inn without Temple Bar".² Such items of bare setting he put in only because they were essential to telling the story; they are utilized as stage properties are on the barest of stages, being present only so that the 'show' may go on. This method, so non-descriptive, is a dominant one in prose fiction down through Fielding, and will hereafter be referred to as 'stage property setting'.

Sometimes, however, Harmon employed really descriptive setting. But it is merely an appurtenance to the action, only those objects which are necessary for the relation of the narrative being put in :

¹Thomas Harmon, "Caveat of Warning", in Old Book Collector's Miscellany I: 56 (Reeves and Turner, 1871)

²Ibid. I:59

I lately had standing in my well-house which standeth on the back side of my house a great cauldron of copper being then full of water, having in the same half a dozen of pewter dishes well marked and stamped with the cognizance of my arms: which being noted when they were taken out, were set aside, the water poured out, and my cauldron taken away, being of such a bigness that one man unless he were of great strength was not able far to carry the same. Notwithstanding the same was one night within this two years conveyed more than half a mile from my house, in a common heath, and there bestowed in a great firbush.¹

Or it is, as with Walker, occasionally used to satisfy public curiosity as to the unfamiliar habits of rogues, as in the following selection where Harmon describes the "bedding down" of a "female vagabond":

She shuffles up a quantity of straw or hay, into some pretty corner of the barn where she may conveniently lie, and well shaketh the same, making the head somewhat high, and drives the same upon the sides and set like a bed: then she layeth her wallet or other little pack or rags or scrip under her head in the straw to bear upon the same, and layeth her petticoat or cloak upon and over the straw, so made like a bed and that serveth for a blanket; then she layeth her slate which is her sheet upon that.²

Robert Greene

Nashe, strangely enough considering his later work in Jack Wilton, makes no notable use of setting in his pamphlets, so it is not until 1592 that setting is put to a slightly more detailed usage by Greene, who, however, makes little use of it until the third part of Conny Catching. But then he be-

¹ Thomas Harmon, op.cit., I:25

² ibid., p.29

comes, at times, very circumstantial, and paints an extensive and fairly vivid background, the elements of which, however, are all utilized in the action, and exist only to provide machinery for its occurrence:

The bed [for the conny-catcher] was in the same room where they supped, being commonly called their hall, and there indeed stood a very fair bed, as in such slighty rooms it may easily be thought Citizens used not to have anything mean or small. The Mistress, lest her guest should imagine she disturbed him, suffered all the plate to stand still in the cupboard....and when she perceived his bed was warmed, she and her husband bidding him good night: took themselves to their chamber, which was on the same floor but inward, having another chamber between them and the hall, where the maids and children had their lodg-ing.... when the apprentices having brought up the keys of the street door, and left them in their master's chamber as they were wont to do, after they had said their prayers, their evening exercise, to bed they go likewise, which was in a garret backward over their master's chamber.¹

Here, however, there is still no artistic use of setting, though the author is concerned with detailing a background which, though bare, will make the conny-catcher's escape with the household goods seem convincingly life-like. And there is considerable awkwardness in the attempted blending of the detail.

Nevertheless, Greene has reserved for himself, perhaps by accident, an enviable place in the history of setting by being the first to make an effective use of it as an instrument for producing changes in character. This occurs in his story of the conversion of an English courtesan by a

¹ Robert Greene, "Third Part of Conny-Catching",
Bodley Head Quartos III:18-19 (N.Y.:E.P.Dutton and Co., n.d.)

clothier:

I will drink no more but in a chamber, marry sir quoth I you shall, and so brought him into the fairest room; in our sitting together drinking, at last the clothier fell to kissing and other dalliance wherein he found me not coy, at last he told me he would willingly have his pleasure of me, but the room was too lightsome, for of all things in the world, he could not in such actions away with a light chamber, I consented unto him and brought him into a room more dark but still he said it was too light, then I carried him into a farther chamber where drawing a buckram before the window, and closing the curtains of the bed, I asked him smiling if that was close enough, no sweet love saies he, the curtain is thin and not broad enough for the window, peradventure some watching eye may espy us, my heart misdoubts, and my credit is my life, good love, if thou hast a more close room than this, bring me to it, why then quoth I follow me, and with that I brought him into a back loft, where stood a little bed only appointed to lodge suspicious persons, so dark that at noon day it was impossible for any man to see his own hands, how now sir quoth I, is not this dark enough, he sitting down on the bedside fetched a sigh, and said indifferent, so, so, but there is a glimpse of light in at the tyles, somebody may by fortune see us, in faith no quoth I, none but God, God says he, why can God see us here, good sir quoth I, why I hope you are not so simple, but God's eyes are so clear and penetrating that they can pierce even through walls of brass and that were we enclosed never so secretly, yet we are manifestly seen to him, and alas quoth he sweet love, if God sees us shall we be not more ashamed to do such a filthy act before Him than before men, I am sure thou art not so shameless but thou wouldest blush and be afraid to have the meanest commoner in London see thee in the act of thy filthy lust, and dost thou not shame more to have God, the maker of all things see thee, who revengeth sin with death, he whose eyes are clearer than the sun, who is the searcher of the heart, and holdeth vengeance in his hands to punish sinners.¹

Here, through the vital use of setting to influence and bring about a change in character, is skill in application of

¹ Robert Greene, "Disputation Between a Hee Conny-Catcher and a Shee Conny-Catcher", Bodley Head Quartos
III:76-77

setting to characterization not reached again for well over a century and a quarter, though Defoe does use setting to produce a moral reaction. Greene has created a definite mood through a simple setting which is fused with the narrative action smoothly and effectively.

Henry Chettle and the Author of The Defence of Conny-Catching

Contemporary with the achievement of Greene, there are three other developments worth noting. The first of these is to make a highly dramatic use of the 'stage properties' necessary to the narrative thread - a device whose importance constantly grows and which soon becomes dominant. The early masters in this tradition are Chettle and the unknown author of the Defence of Conny-Catching. Though it is not quite so strong in effect as that of the author of the Defence of Conny-Catching, the use that Chettle makes of setting for dramatic effect is well worth noting. He tells us, for instance, of how, to enrich himself, a man sets out to get himself a reputation as a seer. Having spirited away some of his neighbors' cattle, he retires to his chamber. The next morning when the neighbors come to inquire of him, a confederate

very kindly takes them into a hall, and when his worship stirs, promises they shall speake with him at liberty. Now sir behind a curtain in the hall stands a shelfe garnisht with booke, to which my mate goes under to take one down. And as he takes it down pulleth certain strings which are fastened to certain small bells in

his Maister's Chamber, and as the bels strike, hee knows what cattell his neighbors come to seeke, one bel being for Oxen....¹

When the neighbors at last get to the seer, they are startled to find that he already knows what cattle they have lost and also where they are. The setting here makes for good heightening of the drama. And so it does in the story of the Walking Mort who pretends to be a spiritualistic medium; she approaches a man and his wife, telling them that she has heard of a treasure that may belong to them:

And more (said she) if I have a several room to myself, hangd round with white linnen, with other instruments, I will by morning tell ye whether it be destined to you.

The Goodman and his wife giving credit to her words, fetcht forth their finest sheets, and garnisht a chamber as she appointed: seven candles she must have lighted, and an Angell she woulde have laide in every candle sticke.²

Now the Mort retires to the chamber, and, having picked up the money, reappears; whereupon she insists that the man and his wife stay in the room prepared for her and promise not to leave it till she comes again. Then she leaves, on the pretext of going to force the spirits to release the treasure. The setting is put to a dramatic usage, for here the wife and husband spend twelve long hours without food, expecting her return.

In this period, however, the sharpest and most dramatic

¹Henry Chettle, "Kind-Hartes Dreame", Bodley Head
Quartos, IV:57

²Ibid. p.64

use of setting is in the following selection by the author of the Defence of Conny-Catching, who tells us how a wife turned on a usurer who was about to foreclose the mortgage on her home. The wife brings him into a back room, and says: "If there were a dormar built to it and there shut windows made bay windows and glazd, it would make the properest parlor in al the house : for put your head out at this window, and looke what a sweet prospect belongs to it." When he has complied, she shuts the window on him, and calls her maids; they bind and pinnion "the caterpillar's arms fast" so that he stands with his head into the backyard "as if he had been on a pillary and struggle durst not for stifling himself." Thereupon she gets nails and a hammer, nails his ears to the house, arms her children with sharp knives - and displays him to neighbors whom she has invited to supper. When she threatens to chop off his ears, he confesses all - and the neighbors and the good wife celebrate.¹ In pamphlet literature this is probably the most effective theatrical use of 'stage property' setting that we have before Dekker; it is bare but so simple as to produce a striking visualization. The method itself, which may have its origin in the fabliau tradition, is important because it is one still stressed by Fielding 150 years later and used extensively by his predecessors.

¹"Cuthbert Conny-Catcher's Defence of Conny-Catching", Bodley Head Quartos X:20-25

Contemporary with these early experiments in the dramatic use of bare stage properties which are, nevertheless, sufficient to lend some slight probability to the narrative, is the following setting of Chettle's, notable because it marks two new trends in the history of setting. Faced with the problem of accounting for his acquiring of manuscripts purportedly written by Greene and others, he has their ghosts appear to him in a dream, and for this dream creates the following background :

Sitting alone not long since, not far from Finshirie,
in a Taphouse of Antiquity, attending the comming of such
companions as might wash care away with carowsing; Sleep,
the attendant upon distempered bodies, bereft the sunnes
light by covering mine eies with her sable mantle, and
left me in the night's shade, though the daies eie shinde;
so powerful was my received potion, so heavy my passion :
whence (by my hostess' care) being removed to a pleasant
parlor, the windoes opened to the East, I was laide softly
on a downe bed, and covered with equal furniture.¹

The notable departures here are (1) the use of setting to form a framework or background explanatory of the origin of a series of stories, and (2) the combination of heroic personification and simple realistic detail in setting, - a device important because of its development later by Dekker and Fielding, who employ it for humorous and dramatic effects.

It has been shown, then, that while the realistic pamphleteers who wrote before 1600 minimized setting, relying

¹Henry Chettle, op.cit., p.11

largely on essential 'stage properties' and on an occasional bit of unusual local color, they did, though infrequently, make early significant uses of it. Nashe painted one fairly extensive and circumstantial setting, utilizing the details in his narrative; Greene once stumbled on a means of using setting to produce character reactions; Chettle and the unknown author of the Defence of Conny-Catching made a few highly dramatic applications of the stage property technique; and Chettle once employed setting as a background explanatory of the origin of a group of stories, and at the same time used the heroic in juxtaposition to the ordinary.

II

WRITERS OF LONG NARRATIVES BEFORE 1600

Before considering the development of setting in the pamphlet literature of the seventeenth century, it seems desirable to discuss the settings in the nearest approaches to the novel in the late sixteenth century : Nashe's Jack Wilton, and Deloney's Jack of Newberry, The Gentle Craft, and Thomas of Reading. These stories are episodic in character, and partake generously of the subject matter of roguery, in which respects they are clearly developments of the pamphlet strain. However, they are divorced from that strain in that they possess a unifying hero or a related group of important personages; in this, they may have been influenced by the Spanish picaresque form.

Thomas Nashe

In Jack Wilton (1594) Nashe makes use, for the first time in realistic English prose fiction, of historical detail, and so becomes an important forerunner of the historical novel. Setting his story in the reign of Henry VIII, he takes as his hero a wandering adventurer who engages in or witnesses important historical battles, meets historical personages, and visits France, Germany, and Italy where he sees historical buildings and observes historical events. All this realism, however, including the settings, is so arranged as to create a belief in much of the highly romanticized,

rollicking roguery of the hero, a suspension of disbelief in his most wild adventures, and a partial, temporary, suspension of both belief and disbelief in the blood-and-thunder romancing of depraved fictional rogues and villains who flourished in Rome and Bologna; the romancing increasing throughout the story till it would seem absolutely incredible were it not for the historical realism of some of the settings and for some of the historical narrative detail. Consciously or not, Nashe fits settings into a narrative of considerable magnitude in such a way as to prevent the reader from ever assuming complete disbelief in the most wildly extravagant romantic villainy of that narrative - a feat probably not accomplished as well again for another century and a quarter.

The early adventures of Jack Wilton are the quite probable simple roguery of a clever soldier - and are supported by mention of the siege of "the two hundred and fifty towers of Turney and Turwin"¹, and by the following descriptions of the sieges of Millaine and Munster:

Siege of Millaine

Over Sea with my implements I got mee, where hearing the King of France and the Switzers were together by the eares....I saw a wonderful spectacle of blood-shed on both sides: here unweeldie Switzers wallowing in their gore, like an Oxe in his dung, there the sprightly French sprawling and turning on the stained grasse, like a Roach new taken out of the streame: all the ground was strewed as thicke with Battle-axes as the Carpenter's yard with chips; the Plaine appeared like a quagmyre, overspred as it was with trampled dead bodies. In one place might you

¹Thomas Nashe, Works II:209 (London : Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., 1910)

behold a heape of dead murthered men overwhelmed with a falling steede in stead of a toombe stone, in another place a bundell of bodies fettered together in their own bowells; and as the tyrant Romane Emperours used to tie condemned living caytives face to face to dead corses, so were the half living here mixt with squeezed carcases long putrifide.¹

Battle of Munster, With Preliminary
Caricature of Equipment of Leiden and the
Anabaptists

.... on his head for a helmet a hugh high shooe with the bottome turnd upwards, embossed as full of hob-nayles as ever it might stick a scarfife made of lysts like a bow-case, a crosse on his breast like a thred bottome, a round twilted Taylors cushion buckled like a Tankard-bearers device to his shoulders for a target, the pyke whereof was a pack-needle, a tough prentises club for his spear, a great Bruers cow on his backe for a corslet.²

.....
Lo according to the summe of their impudent supplications [in their pre-battle prayer meeting], a signe in the heavens appeard, the glorious signe of the rainebowe, which agreed iust with the signe of their ensigne that was a rainebowe likewise....

The Emperialls themselves that were their Executioners (like a father that weepes when he beates his childe, yet still weepes and stil beates) not without much ruth and sorrow prosecuted that lamentable massacre : yet drums and trumpets sounding nothing but stearne revenge in their eares, made them so eager that their handes had no leisure to ask counsell of their effeminate eyes; their swordes, theyr pikes, their bills, their bowes, their caleeuers slew, empierced, knockt downe, shot through, and overthrew as manie men everie minute of the battell as theire falls eares of corne before the sythe at one blow: yet all their weapons so slaying, empiercing, knocking downe, shooting through, over-throwing, dissoule-ioyned not half so manie as the hailing thunder of the great Ordinance : so ordinarie at everie foote-step was the imbrument of yron in bloud, that one could hardly discern heads from bullets, or clotted haire from mangled flesh hung with goare.³

¹ Ibid., p.231

² Ibid., p.232

³ Ibid., pp.240-42

The first setting is an example of the bolstering of some realistic detail by exaggerated figures - a technique used by Nashe in his pamphlets where it is, however, a method devoted exclusively to caricature and characterization rather than to setting. The second setting, that of the siege of Munster, though obviously written in a vein of heightened satire, gives a picture true in spirit to the events of the historical slaughter.

After these sieges Wilton returns to England and then goes abroad with Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. (In keeping with the general practice of the pamphleteers, there is no description of the well-known details of England, a place more familiar to the readers than those abroad, which Nashe describes in the hope of appealing to the reader's curiosity.) After journeying to Rotterdam, they arrive at Wittenberg; and Nashe paints a satiric picture of the burghers' welcoming the Duke of Saxonie, adding details of setting that increase its probability:

At the townes end met him the burgers and dunsticall incorporationers of Wittenberg in their distinguished liveries, their distinguished liverie faces, I meane, for they were most of them hot livered dronkards, and had all the coate colours of sanguine, purple, crimson, copper, carnation, that were to be had, in their countenances, Filthie knaves, no cost had they bestowed on the towne for his welcome, saving new painted their houghs and bousing houses, which commonly are fairer than their churches, and over their gates set the towne armes carousing a whole health to the Dukes armes, which sound-

ed gulping after this sorte, Vanhotten, slotten, irk bloshe-
en glotten gelderslike : what ever the wordes were, the
sense was this, Good drinke is a medicine for all dis-
eases. ¹

So far we have seen Nashe holding the readers' faith in his narrative by realistic satire supported with historic or historically probable touches of setting. This stands him in excellent stead when, his hero arriving at Venice, Nashe describes in the same satiric-realistic vein the house of Tabitha the courtezan:

The place whether he brought us was a pernicious curtizās house named Tabitha the Temptresses, a wench that could set as civill a face on it as chastities first martyr Lucrecia. What will you conceit to be in saints house that was there to seeke? Bookes, pictures, beades, crucifixes, why, there was a haberdashers shop of thē in everie chāher. I warrant you should not see one set of her neckerches perverted or turned awrie, not a piece of haire displact. On her beds there was not a wrinkle of any wallowing to be found, her pillows bare out as smooth as a growing wives belly, and yet she was a Turke and an infidel, and had more doings then all her neighbors besides her house stood upon vaultes, which in two hundred years together were never searcht. ²

Here we have a touch of local color in the mention of the vaults, and the rest of the setting, though highly general, does help to reveal the crafty intelligence of Tabitha.

As a result of Nashe's skill in building up belief through a realistic-satiric background and through giving realistic caricatures, the reader finds the highly roman- tized adventures of Wilton with Tabitha and Flavia Aemelia

¹ Ibid., p. 247

² Ibid., p. 255-56

and her companions, and his imprisonment at the Mint Keeper's house not believable but permitting a suspension of disbelief as a carry-over from the realistic effect previously built up. And so as not to lose his advantage (which he certainly is constantly in danger of doing) Nashe brings Wilton from Venice, through Florence, to Rome "the Queen of the world and metrapolitane mistres of all other cities", and gives us some definitely historic detail - though still in a satiric vein - to bolster up our credulity:

The chiefest thing that my eyes delighted in, was the church of the seven Sibels, which is the most miraculous thing; all their prophecies and oracles being there in rolde, as also the beginning and ending of their whole catalogue of the heathen Gods, with theyr manner of worship. There are a number of other shrines and statues dedicated to the Emperours, and withall some statues of idolatrie reserved for detestation.

I was at Pontius Pilates house and pist against it. The name of the place I remember not, but it is as one goes from Saint Paules Church not farre from the iemmes Piazza. There is a prison yet packt up together (an olde rotten thing) wher the man that was condemned to death, and coulde have no bodie come to him and succour him but was searcht, was kept alive a long space by sucking his daughters breasts.

These are but the shoppe dust of the sights that I sawe....the ruins of Pompeies theatre, reputed one of the most woders of the world, Gregory y sixths tombe, Priscillas grate or the thousand pillers arrered amongst the raced foundations of olde Rome, it were frivolous to specifie, since he that hath but once dronke with a traveller talks of them. Let me be a historiographer of my owne misfortunes, and not meddle with the continued Trophees of so olde a triumphing Citiel.¹

To this realistic mention of historical relics, Nashe

¹Ibid., p.280-81

next adds a description of a merchant's 'summer Banqueting house', which certainly causes the reader to wonder whether he is reading of real artistic wonders of Renaissance Italy or being duped by euphuistic exaggeration and invention:

To tell you of the rare pleasures of their gardens, thyr bathes, theyr vineyarde, theyr galleries, were to write a second part of the gorgeous Gallerie of gallant devices. Why, you should not come into anie mannes house of account, but hee hadde fish-ponds and little orchardes on the toppe of his leads. If by raine or any other meanes those ponds were so full they need to be slust or let out, even of their superfluities they made melodious use, for they had great winde instruments in stead of leaden spoutes, that went duly on consort, onely with this waters rumbling discent. I sawe a summer banketting house belonging to a merchaunt, that was the mervaire of the world, & could not be matcht except God should make another paradise. It was built round of greene marble like a Theatre without : within there was a heaven and earth comprehended bothe under one roofe; the heaven was a cleere overhang-ing vault of Christall, wherein the Sunne and Moone and each visible Starre had his true similitude, shine, scitu-ation, and motion, and, by what enwrapped art I cannot conceive, those spheares in their proper orbis observed their circular wheelings and turnings, making a certain kind of soft angelical murmering musick in their often windings & going about.... For the earth, it was counterfeited in that liknes that Adam lorde out it before his fall. A wide vast spacious romme it was, such as we would conceit prince Arthurs hall to be, where he feasted all his knights of the round table together everie pentecost. The flore was painted with the beautifullest flowers that ever mans eie admired; which so linealy were delineated that he that viewed them a farre off, and had not directly stood pooring over them, would have sworne they had lived in deede. The wals round about were hedge with Olives and palme trees, and all other odoriferous fruitbearing plants; which at anie solemne intertainment dropt mirrhe and frankenscence. Other trees, that bare no fruit, were set in iust order one against another, & divided the roome into a number of shadie lanes, leaving but one overspreading pine tree arbor, where we sat and banketted. On the well clothed boughs of this conspiracie of pine trees against the resembled Sun beames, were percht as many sortes of shrill breasted birdes as

the Summer hath allowed for singing men in hir silvane chappels. Who though there were bodies without soules, and sweete resembled substances without sense, yet by the mathematicall experimenteres of long silver pipes secretlye inrinded in the intrailes of the boughs whereon they sate, and undiscernable convaide under their bellies into their small throats sloaping, they whistled and freely carold theyr naturall field note. Neyther went those silver pipes straight, but by many edged unsundred writhings & cranked wanderings aside, if anie demand how the winde was breathed; forsooth ^{the} tail of the silver pipe stretcht it selfe into the mouth of a great paire of belowes, where it was close soldered, and bайлde about with yron, it coulde not stirre nor have anie vent betwixt. Those bellowes with the rising and falling of leaden plummets wounde up on a wheele, dyd beate up and downe uncessantly, and so gathered in wind, serving with one blast all the snarled pipes to and fro of one tree at once. But so closely were all those organizing instruments obscured in the corpulent trunks of the trees, that everie man there present renounst coniectures of art, and sayd it was done by enchantment.¹

After two more paragraphs of description, based on "the lion shall lie down with the lamb" theme, Nashe concludes : "Such a golden age, such an honest age was set forth in this banqueting house." The most credulous reader's wonder now having given away to at least the beginnings of disbelief, Nashe (having had his fun with pastoral euphuism) hastens to add a commonplace detail, which, whether true or not, begins to counter-balance the disbelief:

Their hospitals are more lyke noble mens houses than otherwise; so richly furnished, cleane kept, and hot perfumed, that a souldier woulde thinke it a sufficient recompense for all his travell and his wounds, to have such a heavenly retryng place.²

¹ Ibid., pp. 282-85

² Ibid., p. 285

And he immediately follows this with a description of the plague which, though somewhat burlesqued as was the custom later of Dekker and others, is convincingly realistic and circumstantial:

So it fel out that it being a vehement hot summer.... within three quarters of a yeare in that one citie there died of it a hundred thousand; looke in Lanquets chronicle and you shall find it. To smell of a nosegay that was poisond, and turne your nose to a house that had the plague, it was all one. The clouds, like a number of cormorants that keepe their corne til it stinke and is mustie, kept in their stinking exhalations, till they had almost stifeled all Romes inhabitants.... All daye and all night long carre-men did nothing but go up and down the streets with their carts and cry, Have you anie dead bodies to bury? and had many times out of one house their whole loding : one grave was the sepulchre of seven score, one bed was the alter wheron whole families were offered.

The wals wer hoard and furd with the moist scorching steame of their desolation. Even as before a gun is shot, a stinking smoake funnels out and prepares the way for him, so before any gave up the ghost, death araid in a stinking smoak stopt his nostrels and cramd itself ful into his mouth that closed up his felloes eyes,to give him warning to prepare for his funeral.¹

This setting is used to make more plausible than it could otherwise be the melodramatic climax of the rape of Heraclide, the story² of which is as follows: Bartol and Esdras, having gained admittance to Heraclide's home by "knocking at the doore late in the night," separated, Esdras going to the room of Heraclide and her zanie, and Bartol surprizing Jack Wilton, who was abed with his courtezan. All the other people in the house being ill of the plague, Jack prepared

¹ Ibid., p.286

² Ibid., pp.287-295

to defend himself, escaped Bartol's first sword thrust, and seized his own uncharged pistol from the window. But when Bartol threatened to run the courtezan through if Jack aimed, Jack allowed himself to be shut "in his chamber", threw himself on his "pallate" and beat his head against the walls as Bartol, having secured the courtezan, pretended to charge his watchmen to knock Jack down if he "stirde but a foote downe the stayres." Meanwhile, below, Esdras slew Heraclide's zanie at her feet, and ranted to Heraclide of his deeds of terror. Then, as she pleaded with him to save his soul by saving her honor, "he sitting in his chaire of state against the doore all the while that she pleaded, leaning his overhanging gloomie ey-browes on the pommell of his unsheathed sword.... never lookt up or gave her a word." Afterwards, ranting further of his cruelties, he told her he's make her a whore, and grabbing her by the throat, dragged her by the untwisted braids of her hair "up and down the chamber and setting his barbarous foote on her snowy breast, bad her yeld or have her winde stamp out." Told to stamp, "on the hard boards he threw her, and used his knee as an yron ramme to beate ope the leaud gate of her chastitie. Her husband's dead bodie he made a pillow to his abominations" - and went his way. Soon after, Heraclide began to rise "as a corse rising from his hierse after he is carried to church" and "looking on the tone side....spide her husband's body lying

under her head." After berating herself for her beauty (though we've been told that "her eyes were dim, her cheeks bloodles, her breath smelt earthy, her countenance was gastly") "she hastely ran and lookt hir selfe in her glasse, to see if her sin were not written on her forehead : with looking shee blusht, though none looked upon her but her own reflected image." Then, feeling that God and the angels would hiss her for her impurity, she killed herself as pittance." So (thoroughly stabd) fell she downe, and knockt her head against her husband's body; wherewith he, not having been aired his ful four and twentie houres, start [sic] as out of a dreame : whilst I [adds Jack Wilton] through a crannie of my upper chamber unseeled, had beheld all this sad spectacle." Rolling his wife's corpse off his breast, the husband lighted a candle by whose flickering rays he saw "his wife with her haire about her eares, defiled and massacred"; then, taking his halbred in hand, he ran from chamber to chamber, and finding Jack lying on his bed with his rapier unsheathed on the window sill, caused his arrest.

In this melodramatic tale Nashe makes skilled use of bare stage properties to heighten his drama, especially notable being his use of the mirror, a dramatic device which we will find his successors quite occasionally employing. It should be noted also that the plague setting, - especially if we take into account with it the fact that the last few set-

tings have caused the reader to swing pendulum-like between belief and disbelief - increases the plausibility of the Heraclide narrative, and to a certain extent, at least, brings about a suspension of both belief and disbelief. As a result, the reader becomes tired of the seemingly futile attempt to draw a sharp line between the possible and the impossible, and is glad to accept, with little questioning or troubling, the extreme improbabilities of the Zadock, Zacherie, Juliana, Pope narrative, which follows directly upon the Heraclide incident and which reaches the height of rogue-sensationalism; he is content to delight in the caricature of the horrible, pernicious Dr. Zacherie, the scheming of poisoning Juliana, the Spanish-Inquisition-outdoing execution of the cruel Zadoch. Especially is this so since the sensational events are related with a tongue-in-the-cheek attitude by Nashe (an attitude indicated by his wholesale employment of caricature for characterization) and are blended with the perfectly probable description of the approach to Zadoch's house and of the elegance of the ceremony of a St. Peter's Feast Day:

Zadoch's House

Tracing uppe and downe the Cittie to seeke my Curtizan till the Evening began to grow verie well in age, it thus fortuned: the Element, as if it had drunke too much in the afternoone, powrde dowme so profoundly, that I was forct to creep like one afraid of the watch close under the pentises, where the cellar doore of a Iewes house caled Zadoch (over which in my direct way I did passe) being

unbard on the in-side, over head and eares I fell into it, as a man falls in a shippe from the oreloope into the hold or as in an earth-quake the ground should open, and a blind man come feeling pad pad over the open Gulph with his staffe, should tumble on a sodaine into hell.¹

General Atmosphere of St.Peter's Day
Feast To Which Juliana Is Invited By The
Pope

That day is a day of supreme solemnity in Rome, when the Embassador of Spaine comes and presents a milke white iennet to the pope, that kneeles downe upon his owne accord in token of obeisaunce and humilitie before him, and lets him stride on his back as easie as one strides over a blocke : with this iennet is offered a rich purse of a yard length, full of Peter pense. No musicke that hath the gifte of utterance, but sounds all the while : coapes and costly vestments decke the hoarreste and beggerlyest singing-man, not a clarke or sexten is absent, no, nor a mule or a foot-cloth belonging to anie Cardinall but attends on the taile of the triumphe. The pope himself is borne in his pontificalibus through the Burgo (which is the chief streete in Rome) to the Embassadours house to dinner, and thether resortes all the assembly.²

The Procession of Juliana, Wife of the
Marquis of Mantua, On the Way To The St.
Peter's Day Feast

To this feast Iuliana addressed her selfe like an angel; in a litter of greene needle worke wrought like an arbour and open on everie side was she borne by four men, hidden under cloth rough plushed and woven like eglington and woodbine. At the four corners it was topt with foure rounde christall cages of Nightingales. For foote men, on either side of her went foure virgins clad in lawne, with lutes in their hands, playing. Next before her, two and two in order, a hundred pages in sutes of white cipresse and long horsemens coates of cloth of silver : who being all in white, advanced everie one of them her picture, enclosed in a white rounde screene of feathers, such as is carried over greate princesses heads when they ride in summer, to keepe them from the heate of the sun. Before them went a foure score bead women shee mantayned in greene gownes, scattering strawing hearbes and floures. After her followed the blinds, the halte, and the lame, sumptuously apparelled like Lords; and thus past she on to S.Peters.³

¹ Ibid., p.303

² Ibid., p.317

³ Ibid., p.317-18

Nashe surrounds us here with an atmosphere of magnificence, conforming in the main to the magnificence historically credited to the regal processions of the time (though he does add a touch about beggars, which suggests to us that he still has his tongue in his cheek) - magnificence which, when accepted as probable causes us to wonder whether our previous feelings of doubt concerning other spectacular events and settings are justifiable. We come to feel that anything can happen here in Renaissance Rome - that heinous crime is perhaps no more improbable than the dazzling splendor which we are forced by history to accept. Now in a world where belief and disbelief have ceased to matter, we read the psychologically powerful narrative of the vengeance of Cutwolf, for which Nashe gives no setting beyond the mention of a bed and a chamber. Enthralled by Nashe's knowledge of the criminal mind, we coast back easily to recognizable reality, and arrive with Wilton "at the king of England's campe twixt Ardes and Guines in France, where he with great triumphs met and entertained the Emperour and the French king, and feasted many daies."¹

In the course of reading Jack Wilton we have been taken from reality, past the border line of probability, into the realm of extravaganza, and back again to reality; the passage has not always been smooth, the technique - conscious or not - has more often than not been awkward and rough. But

¹Ibid., p.327-28

we have made the trip, and the way has been pointed for romancers like Scott and Stevenson and a host of others who make romance convincing by mixing it with a liberal quantity of realism. Nashe has amply exemplified the value of realistic setting in gaining reader-acceptance of plot detail; and although he obviously did not gain by it a constant sense of probability for his story, his is, at this stage in the development of the novel, an amazing achievement. For taking adventures that, in themselves, frequently seem almost impossible, he has, largely through a skillful use of setting, made them appear almost probable, and has kept the reader from at any time pronouncing them impossible.

Thomas Deloney

Between 1597 and 1599 Thomas Deloney, the weaver, wrote the three novels of guild life in England which have gained for him an important place in the history of English fiction. As F.O.Mann points out:

His novels show the closest acquaintance with the life of travelling craftsmen, with the legends, customs and topography of certain districts, and especially those around which the Elizabethan textile industries were centered, and acquaintance which could scarcely have been gained except by personal experience. He writes of Pentworth and the high road thence to London, of Gloucester, Canterbury, and Colnbrook, with the casual accuracy which betokens familiarity, and his skilful imitation of the northern dialect indicates a very real knowledge of its peculiarities. There cannot be the slightest doubt that he must have lived at Newbury long enough to have become well acquainted with its traditions and customs, with the surrounding countryside and the names and reputations of local gentlefolk. Probably Berkshire as a whole was well known to him, for both Jack of Newberie and Thomas of Reading seem largely derived from traditional sources. His knowledge of Newbury streets and suburbs is remarkably detailed and correct. Parry, Englefield, and Hungerford in Jack of Newberie, and Novel, Abridge and Rainsford in The Gentle Craft (II) are the names of Berkshire country families adopted boldly into fiction.¹

Deloney's accuracy in English topography is, in itself, enough to make him an important forerunner of Defoe and Fielding, both of whom write, on occasion, with such topographical accuracy that the itinerary of their heroes can be plotted on a map - a most persuasive means of creating an assumption of probability in the minds of readers, especially those familiar with the locales mentioned. Yet this is far from the most im-

¹F.O.Mann, Works of Deloney, xi (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912)

portant of his achievements in setting.

As Nashe did before him, he makes use of considerable pageantry and local color; but, unlike Nashe's, his local color is inextricably bound up with the customs and locales of England, and particularly of the guilds, so that for the first time in English prose fiction we glimpse the picturesque milieu of middle class commercial life. Some of these settings simply provide color and do not influence character or motivate the plot. The following description of the London visit of the wives of Simon of Southampton and Sutton of Salisburie, two ladies "wholly bent to pride and pleasure", is of this type:

Now when they were brought to Cheapside, there with great wonder they beheld the shops of Goldsmithes; and on the other side, the wealthy Mercers, whose shoppes shined with all sorts of coloured silks; in Watling-street they viewed the great number of Drapers: in Saint Martins Shoomakers: at Saint Nicholas Church, the flesh shambles: at the end of the old Change, the Fishmongers: in Candleweeke streete the Weavers: then came into the Iewes street, where all the Iewes did inhabite: then came they to Blackwell hall, where the country Clothiers did use to meete.

Afterwards they proceeded, and came to S. Pauls Church, whose steeple was so high, that it seemes to pierce the cloudes, on the top whereof, was a great and mightie Wether-cocke, of cleane silver, the which notwithstanding seemed as small as a sparrow to mens eyes, it stood so exceeding high, the which goodly wethercocke was afterwards stolen away, by a cunning cripple, who found meanes one night to clime up to the top of the steeple, and tooke it downe: with the which, and a great summe of money which he had got together by ~~begging~~ in his life time, he builded a gate on the North-side of the Citty, which to this day is called Cripole-gate.

From thence they went to the Tower of London, which was builded by Iulius Caesar, who was Emperour of Rome. And there they beheld salt and wine, which had lien there ever since the Romaines invaded this land, which was many yeares before our Saviour Christ was borne, the wine was grown so thick, that it might have beeene cut like a ielly. And in that place they also saw the money that was made of leather, which in ancient time went currant amongst the people.¹

This colorful description of London locales which would interest wives of guildsmen not only is accurate in its detail² (except for the accompanying stories, which may be of Deloney's own invention), but also reveals considerable skill in the selection of descriptive detail likely to appeal to the characters involved. Had Deloney's successors kept in mind this principle of depicting those details of setting which would have been noted by their fictional characters, they need not have been so wary as they were of setting as a device.

Deloney wrote two other purely local color settings worthy of note. The first is his description of Simon Eyre's feast to his prentices on Shrove Tuesday:

at

Hereupon it was ordered that the ringing of a Bell in every Parish, the Prentises should leave work and shut up their shops for that day, which being ever since yearly observed, it is called the Pancake Bell.

The Prentises being all assembled, my Lord Maiors house was not able to hold them, they were such a multitude, so that besides the great Hall, all the Gardens were set with Tables, and in the backside Tables were set, and every other spare place was also furnish'd: so that at length they were al placed and while meat was bringing in, to delight their eares, as well as to feed their bodies, and to drown the noise of their prattlings, Drums and Trumpets were pleasantly sounded:

¹Thomas Deloney, Works, p.234-235

²Ibid., p.553. According to Mann's note, Stowe's Survey confirms all this detail

that being ended, the waits of the City, with divers other sorts of musick played also to beguile the time, and to put off all discontent.¹

This is a pleasant and somewhat detailed description of a typical prentice holiday scene of the time.

The last of these purely local color settings is that of the entrance into a nunnery of Margaret, after her betrothed, Duke Robert, had had his eyes put out by the king's order:

The streets thorow the which she should passe, were pleasantly deckt with greene oaken boughs. Then came the yong Lady most like an heavenly Angell out of her Masters house, at which time all the bels in Gloucester were solemnly rung: she being led betwixt the Kings Maeistie, having on his royall robes, and imperiall crown, and the chiefe Bishop wearing his Miter, in a Cope of cloth of gold, over her head a Canopy of white silke, fringed about in a princely manner: before her went an hundred Priests singing, and after her all the chiefe Ladies of the Land, then all the wives and maidens of Gloucester followed, with an innumerable sort of people on every side standing to behold her. In this sort she passed on to the Cathedrall Church, where she was brought to the Nunry gate.²

Here we have pageantry such as we have seen in Nashe, and such as we shall find again in Behn. It is in perfect keeping with the customs of the time even to the minute detail of the ornamenting of the outside of houses with green boughs, a custom which is attested to by Stow, who, in his description of London festivals, remarks:

On the Vigil of Saint John Baptist & on Saint Peter and Paule the Apostles, every man's doore being shadowed with

¹Ibid., p.132-33 (The Gentle Craft)

²Ibid., p.271-72 (Thomas of Reading)

greene Birch, long Fennel, saint John's Wort, Orpin, white Lillies, & such like, garnished upon with Garlands of beautifull flowers, had also Lampes of glasse with oyle burning in them all the night.¹

Deloney, however, went far beyond the mere utilization of setting for local color. In his plots he makes use of distinctive locales or of distinctive features of contemporary architecture and landscaping to provide essential background for the action. He tells us, for instance, how the Green King of St. Martins announced, to a wife who plagued him for outings, that he would escort her to St. James Fair. Taking advantage of the fact that there were two St. James' Fairs on July 25, the husband walked his wife to St. Giles, Kensington "where they brake their fast and had good sport tumbling on the greene grasse"; thence to Brainford, where they spent the night; and thence next day to Bristol. Thinking all the while that she was being taken to St. James Fair at Westminster, the wife found herself woefully tired before reaching St. James Fair, Bristol - and was cured of nagging her husband to take her out.²

Deloney also makes use of the peculiar structure of some of the closets of the time, which were built, as F.O. Mann assures us on the authority of contemporary sources, "so as to give a view upon the kitchen and dining hall and so enable masters and mistresses to keep a watchful eye upon

¹Stow, Survey (edited by Kingsford) I:101

²Thomas Deloney, op.cit., p.209 (The Gentle Craft)

the household, without themselves being seen."¹ And he dramatically employs the private garden, later used by Behn extensively and by Richardson : Haunce makes an assignation with Florence to drink wine and make merry in the garden; but John, a former beau of Florence, has Nicholas substitute water for the wine as Florence and Haunce are "busie toying and talking" near the hedge - and then bangs loudly on the garden door; whereupon Florence, thinking her master and mistress have come, has Haunce escape through the hedge. Then, finding it a false alarm, she and the maid sit down to enjoy the wine;- and intensely disgusted when the wine turns out to be only water, she falls out with Haunce.² This use of the garden here may appear, especially to anybody who comes fresh from a reading of Behn's conventional romances or of those of her successors, to belong properly to the romance tradition rather than to the realistic tradition. Deloney, however, seems to be using the garden as it was used in his time. F.O.Mann points out that the garden

as a favorite place for lovers' meetings had aroused the indignation of Philip Stubbes: 'And for that their Gardens are lōcked, some of them have 3 or fower keyes a piece, whereof one they keep for themselves, the other their Paramours have to goe in before them, lest happely they should be perceived, for then were all their sport dacht These gardens are exelent places, & for the purpose; for if thei can speak with their dearlynges no where els, yet, thei maie be sure to meete them.' Anatomy of Abuses (edited Furnivall) p, 88 Contemporary references seem to

¹Ibid., p.195; 544-545

²Ibid., p.126

show that Stubbes reproaches were not altogether unmerited; e.g. in Heywood's If you know not me, you know nobody (New Shakespeare Society) p.132 :

Hobson. Is not this a lady?

John. No, by my troth, master; such as in the garden alleys.

Holland's Leaguer, the well-known Southwark brothel, was surrounded by gardens 'for doing a spell of embroidery or fine work.' ¹

Twice in Thomas of Reading, a story which claims to begin in the reign of Henry VII, Deloney builds up, around local traditions, dramatic short stories, using settings that form part of the tradition and that are claimed to be still partially in existence. This use of real settings which have gathered around them a rich tradition is extremely interesting, especially since later we shall see that the tradition of his time colored intensively Bunyan's choice and description of settings for Pilgrim's Progress. Deloney's first such story is an attempt to explain the origin of a real custom at Bosome's Inn: He relates how old man Bosome, the inn keeper, suspicious of his wife's attention to Cuthbert of Kendall, rode out into a field and returned suddenly to find that his wife and Cuthbert had locked themselves in a warehouse. After threatening to break down the door, Bosome was admitted and given the excuse that Cuthbert had come to get a cheese he had stored there, and that the door, having a spring lock, had clapped itself to. Angrily he exclaimed that he would teach Cuthbert "to come hither to take cheeses".

¹F.O.Mann, op.cit., p.529-30

And with that he caused his men to take him presently, and to bind him hand and foot. Which being done, they drew him up in a basket into the smoky louer of the hall, and there they did let him hang all that night, even till the next day dinner time, when he should have beene at the banquet with the princes....

And in such a heate was he driven with drawing him up, that he was faine to cast off his gownes, his cotes, and two paire of his stockings, to coole himself, making a vow he shold hang these 7.years, except the kings sonnes came in person to beg his pardon, which most of all grieved Cuthbert...

When they [the princes] heard the story, down to Bosoms Inn they go, where looking up into the roofe, spied poore Cuthbert pinned up in a basket, and almost smoaked to death....

And it is said, the old man Bosome ordained, that in remembrance of the deed, every yeare once all such as came thither to aske for cheeses should be so served : which thing is to this day kept.¹

The setting here, though slight, shows Deloney's interest in the utilization of traditional local color, and adds to the sense of narrative probability.

Far more extensive is the setting of his second traditional story - that of the murder of Thomas of Reading; it is, moreover, used with dramatic effectiveness, and also shows the first effective use, in English realistic narrative prose fiction, of Gothic 'grave-yard' touches:

This man should be then laid in a chamber right over the kitchen, which was a faire chamber, and better set out then any other in the house: the best bedstead therein, though it were little and low, yet was it most cunningly carved, and faire, to the eye, the feet whereof were fast nailed to the chamber floore, in such sort, that it could not in any wise fall, the bed that lay therein was fast sewed to the sides of the bedstead : Moreover, that part of the chamber whereupon this bed and bedstead stood, was made in such sort that by pulling out of two

¹Thomas Deloney, op.cit., p.232-33

yron pinnes below in the kitchen, it was to be let down and taken up by a draw bridge, or in manner of a trap doore : moreover in the kitchen, directly under the place where this should fall, was a mighty great caldron, wherein they used to seethe their liquor when they went to brewing. Now the men appointed for the slaughter, were laid into this bed, and in the dead time of night, when they were sound a sleepe, by plucking out the foresaid yron pinnes, downe would the man fall out of his bed into the boyling caldron and all the cloaths that were upon him : where being suddenly scalded and drowned, he was never able to cry or speake one word.

Then had they a little ladder ever standing ready in the kitchen, by the way they presently mounted into the said chamber, and there closely take away the mans apparell, as also his money, in his male or capcase: and then lifting up the said falling floore which hung by hinges, they made it fast as before.

The dead body they would take presently out of the caldron and throw it downe the river, which ran neere unto this house, whereby they escaped all danger.

.....
The horse the goodman would also take out of the stable, & conuay him by a hay-barne of his, that stood from his house a mile or two, whereof himself did alwaies keepe the keies full charily, and when any hay was to be brought from thence, with his owne hands he would deliuer it; then before the horse should goe from thence, he woulde dismarke him....

All this Deloney introduces as a preliminary statement on how rich men are robbed. He then relates how Thomas of Reading escaped the trap three times by lucky circumstances which called him away. Returning a fourth time, Deloney continues, Thomas Cole felt depressed, made his will, heard solemn music "like the ringing of bells for a forenoones knell", and then started for bed.

With that the scritch owle cried piteously, and anone after the night rauen sate croking hard by his windaw.

Iesu have mercy upon me (quoth he) what an ill favoured cry doe yonder carrion birdes make, and therewithall he

laid him doun in his bed, from whence he neuer rose againe.

After relating how the murderers used the murder device, Deloney then continues :

....but when he [one of the murderers] came to the stable to conuey thence Coles horse, the stable door being open, the horse had got loose, and with a part of the halter about his necke, and straw trussed under his belly, as the ostlers had dressed him ore eue, he was got out at the back side, which led into a great field adioyning to the house, and so leaping diuers hedges, being a lusty stout horse, had got into a ground where a mare was grasing, with whom he kept such a coile, that they got into the high way, where one of the Towne meeting them, knew the mare, and brought her and the horse to the man that owd her.

Deloney concludes that, after hearing how the horse was identified by one of Cole's men, Tarman of the Crane fled, but was captured in Windsor Forest. "And some say", he adds, "that the riuver whereunto Cole was cast, did ever since carry the name of Cole, being called the riuver of Cole, and the Towne of Colebrooke."¹ Of this story F.O.Mann remarks:

....it is probably nothing more than the artistic making up of the details of a contemporary or traditional crime. The circumstantiality of Deloney's account, besides his own habits of composition, are altogether against the supposition that he invented the story himself. The Crane Inn, where old Cole is made to meet his death is without doubt that now known in Colnbrook as the Ostrich, and local tradition, from the mouths of old women and school children, still retells the story of the crime with almost the exact detail of Deloney's narrative. The present landlady is very ready to give every particular of the murders (she asserts the exact number to be 61) and to exhibit the fatal bedroom to the courteous visitor. The falling floor no longer exists, but, in compensation, the good lady shows a beam in the back of the house, where she

¹Ibid., p.255-260

asserts a vain attempt was made to burn it down. The Idler of April, 1899, contains a short article by R. Way-brook upon the Ostrich Inn, which gives the whole story almost verbatim from Thomas of Reading, although the writer quotes no authority. It seems most likely that Deloney himself picked up the story at Colnbrook, and the Colnbrook traditions have either changed very little, or Deloney has influenced and fixed them, although on this latter point there appears to be no obtainable evidence.¹

The technique of Deloney's account is most interesting. First he describes in detail all the necessary properties, giving an exposition of their use in executing a murder. It is notable that he makes no attempt to blend this basic setting for the murder with the details of the murder itself, and so shows that distrust of blending setting with narrative which seems to plague all the early novelists - a distrust which he voices elsewhere when, after describing part of Jack of Newberry's banquet for King Harry, he adds: "the description thereof were too long for me to write and you to read."² Only after Deloney has finished detailing the setting does he introduce the victim, who thrice escapes when lucky circumstances keep him from spending the night in the murder room. Considerable suspense having been thus created, Deloney has Thomas Cole appear at the inn a fourth time and skillfully introduces the Gothic 'grave yard' touches of the mournful music, the screeching owl, and the

¹F.O.Mann, op.cit., p.549

²Thomas Deloney, op.cit., p.30 (Jack of Newbery)

croaking raven, which elicit from Thomas a comment suggestive of the future action and effectively set an eerie mood for the murder. If it were not for the fact that this account antedates by several years Shakespeare's use of Gothic grave yard touches in Caesar,Hamlet,Lear, and Macbeth, there would be a temptation to think of Deloney as being influenced by Shakespeare, as having borrowed from drama an effective Gothic tool for prose narrative. As it is, however, we are left to wonder to what extent, if at all, Deloney or Shakespeare influenced Dekker, Fielding, and later users of Gothic detail, and whether Deloney and Shakespeare¹ derived their ideas of the utilization of grave yard detail from ballad literature. Since Deloney, and to a lesser extent Shakespeare, were both familiar with the ballad tradition, this becomes an interesting conjecture.

Deloney is also, it may be noted in passing, a fore-runner of Dekker and Fielding in continuing the use of heroic personification in setting already seen in Chettle's work. Like Chettle, he mixes it with realistic detail, remarking that "when the sunne was crept under the earth and the stars up in the skies, Richard having his shop shut in, and his doores made fast" went to the Spread Eagle (where he encountered adventures of the fabliau type).² Through the

¹Bradley, in his Shakesperian Tragedy, has suggested that Shakespeare derived his ideas of witchcraft, omens and the supernatural from Reginald Scot's Discovery (1594), but makes no comment on the possible influence of ballad tradition

²Thomas Deloney, op.cit., pp.153-54 (The Gentle Craft)

introduction of these adventures Deloney shows an advance over Chettle, for here personified setting contrasts with the racy, earthy narrative that follows in such a way as to give the whole narrative a humorous, half-mocking undertone. This playful trick was later continued by Dekker and perfected by Fielding. Contrast of the heroic with the realistic is also used by Deloney in the following scene:

So with this and the like thoughts he droue out the night till the Sun began to peep at his chamber window. [Then he went down to the waterside and embarked for western islands.] But when they were put off to Sea, there arose so sudden a storme that the Mariners quite forsooke the tackle, and the Master the helme, committing themselves to God, and their ship to the mercy of the swelling Seas, by whose furious waues they were sometimes tossed up toward heauen, anon thrown down to the deep of hell.¹

But here there is no reason to suppose any humorous intention, for the section immediately preceding it is definitely euphuistic in tone.

Deloney must also be credited with having used setting to motivate plot and to produce changes in the character or attitudes of fictional personages. His attempts are not technically brilliant; he rarely, if ever, produces dramatically effective dynamic relationships between setting and plot or character; yet his attempts - even though the effect of the setting is often only indicated by the general trend of the story, or merely implied - are of considerable importance

¹Ibid., p.80 (The Gentle Craft)

as they help to indicate possible directions in which techniques may be developed.

Two attempts by Deloney to use setting for the motivation of plot call for our attention. The first concerns the scheme by which the widow got Jack for her husband: First she made various efforts to attract his attention, telling him of her suitors as he sat making quills in her workshop, sitting by him as he and other servants ate their dinner;-- but all to no avail.

Thus it past on from Bartholmewtide, till it was neere Christmas, at what time the weather was so wonderfull cold, that all the running Rivers round about the Towne were frozen very thicke. The Widow being loth any longer to lye without company, in a very cold winters night made a great fire, and sent for her man John, hauing also prepared a chaire and a cushion, shee made him sit dounre there-in, and sending for a pinte of good Sacke, they both went to supper.

In the end, bed time comming on, she caused her maid in merriment to plucke off his hose and shooes, and caused him to be laid in his masters best bed, hung round about with very fine curtaines....

Then about midnight she crawled into his bed to warm her cold feet:

O good John it is I (quoth the widow); the night is so extremely cold, and my Chamber walles so thin, that I am like to bee starued in my bed, wherefore rather than I would in any way hazzard my health, I thought it much better to come hither and try your courtesie, to haue a little roome beside you.

Next morning she required him to attend her to chapel on the pretext that she was to be married to someone else, and married him there, for, though he was unwilling, he saw no way

out. She then took him home, caused him to be set in his old master's chair at the end of the table "with a faire napkin laid on his trencher," called her servants, and checked their smiles by dramatically announcing her marriage.¹ In this story we have a quite successful, playful use of setting to motivate the actions of the widow and thus further the plot.

Deloney's second important use of setting to motivate plot is in his relation of the legend of Ursala, the Emperor's daughter who falls in love with Crispine, the shoemaker, and is got with child by him. Crispine, seeking a means to get the princess from the castle without incurring the wrath of the emperor, is advised by his mother :

When you perceiue that she grows neere unto the time of her trauell, I would wish you to work such meanes as to set some tree on fire late in the night, that standeth somewhat neere one of the Beacons upon the Sea coast, whereby it will follow that such Watchmen as watch our Beacons, supposing the Beacons at the Sea coast to be on fire, will set theirs on fire also.²

He is to do this, his mother explains, so that in the confusion resulting from the display of the signal indicative of an enemy attack by sea, Ursala can slip away to his house and be thought lost. Here, then, is a simple, though inherently spectacular suggestion of how setting may further the plot.

Setting to influence character changes, or changes in

¹ Ibid., p.15-16 (Jack of Newberie)

² Ibid., p.80 (The Gentle Craft)

the attitude of characters Deloney also exemplifies, though less dramatically and with far less effectiveness than Greene once did. Except in one or two instances, such setting is rich local color which influences character attitudes gradually and indirectly rather than dramatically; indeed, were the reader not making a study of methods, he would scarcely be conscious that the setting has dynamic influence; and this is especially so since the characters affected disappear almost immediately from the story and since the change of attitude effected in them is evidenced only indirectly by the increased prosperity and reputation that accrues, through their approval and favor, to those who have been instrumental in providing or displaying the setting. These settings, then, merely illustrate an undeveloped possibility in relation to character influence, though they are often interesting for other reasons.

The first of these is Deloney's description of portraits of famous people of lowly birth which are hung in the parlor of Jack of Newberie:

In a faire large Parlour which was wainscotted round about, Jack of Newbery had fifteene Pictures hanging, which were couered with Curtaines of greene silke, fringed with gold.¹

These portraits Jack often displayed to his friends and servants, accompanying the showing with discourses on the lives of the subjects. Aside from the interest of this setting be-

¹Ibid., p.40 (Jack of Newberie)

cause of its implied influence in causing Jack's servants to seek fame and dignity and because of its reflection of Jack's democratic attitude, it affords us another example of Deloney's use of local customs, for Mann assures us that it was customary to hang pictures in such sets.¹ And it is interesting to note that, later, Head, Addison, Richardson and Fielding capitalize on the same custom.

The second of these settings is that of Jack's establishment, a setting used to impress the father of Jack's second wife and so win his blessing:

Within one roome being large and long,
There stood two hundred Loomes full strong:
Two hundred men the truth is so,
Wrought in these Loomes all in a row.

.....

And in a chamber close beside,
Two hundred maidens did abide,
In petticoates of Stammell red,
And milke-white kerchers on their head:
Their smocke-sleeues like to winter snow,
That on the westerne mountaines flow,
And each sleeve with a silken band,
Was neatly tied at the hand.
These pretty maids did neuer lin
But in that place all day did spin:
And spinning so with voices meet,
Like Nightingals they sung full sweet.

In such poetry Deloney also describes the carding, shearing, picking, and dyeing rooms. He then continues:

When the old man had seen this great household and family, then was he brought into the Warehouses, some being fild with wool, some with flockes, some with woad and madder, and some with broadcloathes and kersies ready dyed and

¹F.O.Mann,op.cit.,p.517

drest, beside a great number of others, some strecht on Tenters, some hanging on poles and a great many more lying wet in other places.¹

Here we have abundant local color - enough to impress any intended father-in-law - but it is to be noted that a large part of the description is in verse, which may lead us to conjecture that early novelists may have shared a feeling that colorful, detailed description of scenes was a function of poetry rather than of prose - especially when we note their frequent, voiced distrust of prolonged description in prose narrative.

The fourth and fifth of the settings which influence character attitudes are descriptions of scenes for royal receptions.

Simon Salutes the King at Salisburie
And it is to be remembered, that Simon of South-hampton
(seeing the king had ouerpast the place where he dwelt)
came with his wife and seruants to Salisburie, and against
the King going forth of that Citty, he caused a most
pleasant arbour to be made upon the toppe of the hill
leading to Salisburie, beset all with red and white roses
in such sort, that not any part of the timber could be
seene, within the which sat a maiden attired like a
Queen, attended on by a faire traine of maidens, who at
the King's approach presented him with a Garland of sweet
flowers, yeelding him such honour as the Ladies of Rome
were wont to doe to their Princes after their victories:
which the King took in gracious part, and for his farewell
from that country, they bore him company ouer part of the
Plaine, with a sound of diuers instruments of musicke.

.....
Now when his Grace had thus taken view of all his good
townes Westward and in that progress had visited the
Clothiers,² he returned to London, with great ioy of his
Commons.

¹ Thomas Deloney, op.cit., p.20-21 (Jack of Newberie)

² Ibid., p.241-243 (Thomas of Reading)

This is a colorful description in full keeping with the customs of the time, and may easily have been based on an historical happening; it is, however, only a slight, contributing influence to the formation of the king's general reaction.

The fifth of the settings which influence character reaction is still more interesting; it relates how Jack received King Harry. Knowing that the king "would come over a certain meadow, neere adioining to the Towne", Jack got "himselfe hither with all his men; and repairing to a certain Ant-hill, tooke up his seate there, causing his men to stand around about the same with their swords drawne." Then when the king's messenger came to summon him, he sent word to the king that he was the King of Ants defending his subjects against idle butterflies, and that the king must come to him. Admiring Jack's nerve and his parable, the king came, and then went home with Jack.

Then was his Maiesty brought into a great Hall, where four long tables stood ready couered: and passing through that place, the King and Queen came into a faire and large Parlour, hung about with goodly Tapistry, where was a table prepared for his Highnesse and the Queenes Grace. All the floore where the King sate was couered with broad cloathes instead of greene rushes: there were choice peeces of the finest woll, of an Azure colour, valued at an hundred pound a cloth, which afterward was giuen to his Maiesty a sumptuous banquet was brought in serued all in glasse: the description whereof were too long for mee to write, and you to read.¹

This is by far the most effective use that we find Deloney making of local color setting to influence character atti-

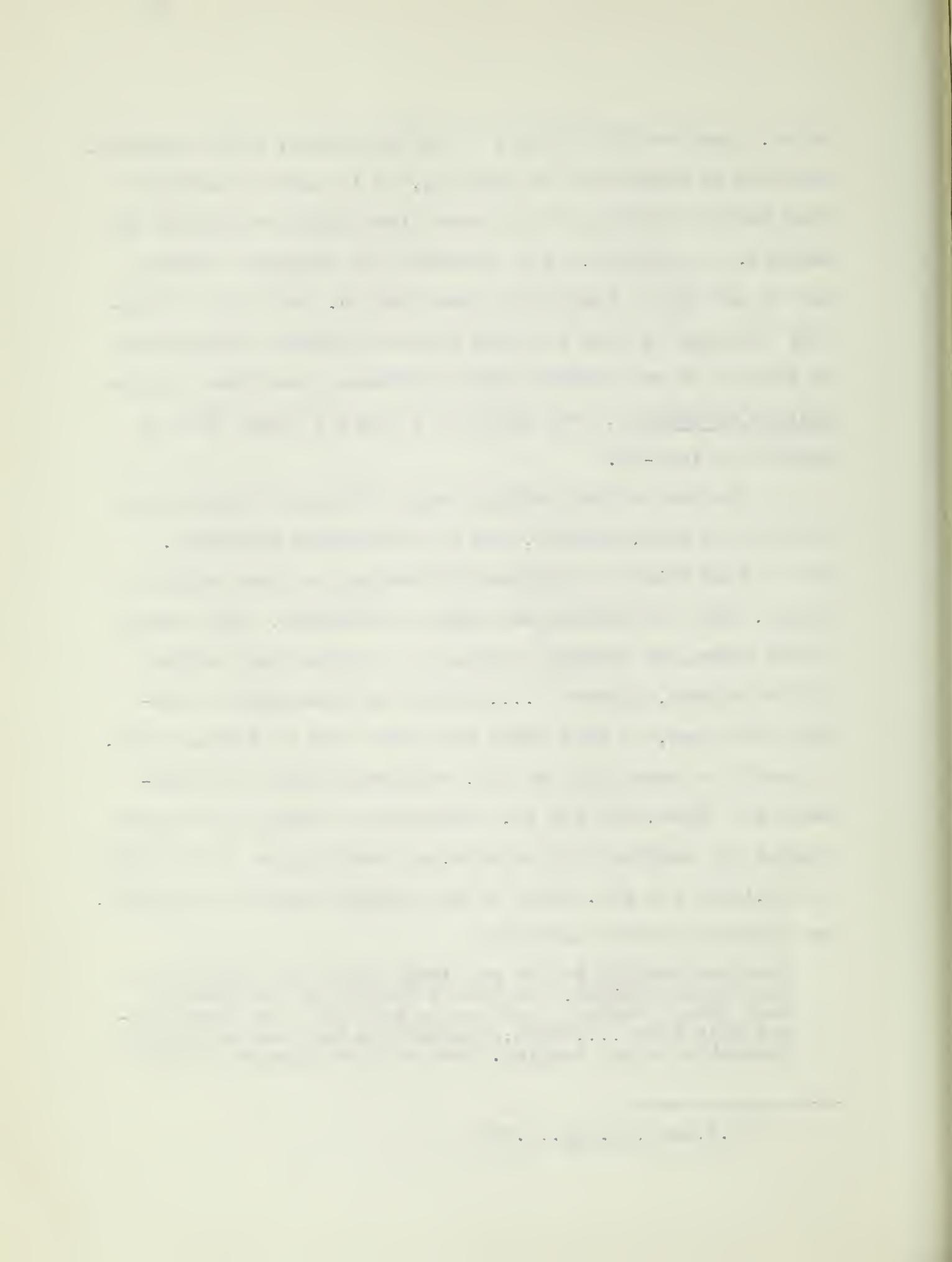
¹ Ibid., p.30 (Jack of Newberie)

tudes. Together with a visit to the dye house, with a pageant, and with an exhibition of spinning, it is used to motivate King Harry's lifting of the trade discrimination against the weavers. In addition, it is possibly our earliest symbolic use of setting in realistic prose fiction. And it is of further interest in that it shows another probable utilization by Deloney of an historic event: Holinshed, and Money in his History of Newbury, both speak of a visit of Henry VIII to Newbury in 1515-16.¹

The last of the settings which influence character or attitude is bare, dramatic, and in the fabliau tradition. Jack's dame tries his patience by staying out late without excuse. When she returns one night at midnight," shee comes to the doore, and knockes to come in : to whom hee looking out the window, answered '....Request the Constable to provide you a bed, for this night you shall haue no lodgning here.' At length he takes pity on her, and dressed only in night-shirt and shoes, lets her in. Whereupon she tells him she has dropped her wedding ring outside, and when he goes out to look for it, locks him out. After he has knocked loudly for a while, she opens the window and says:

Haue you nothing to doe but dance about the streetes at this time of night, and like a Spright of the Butterie hunt after Crickets, are you so hote that the house cannot hold you?Sirra, remember you bade mee go to the Constable to get lodging. Now you have leisure to try if

¹F.O.Mann,op.cit., p.513



his wife will preferre you to a bed. You sir sauce, that made me stand in the cold, till my feet did freeze, and my teeth chatter, while you stood preaching of birds and beasts, telling me a tale of Spiders, Flies, and Frogs : go trye now if any of them will bee so friendly to let thee haue lodging.

With this she claps the casement shut; and he goes to bed with the prentices. Early next day she comes to his bedside to inquire how he slept. He retorts that he will leave her henceforth to her own willfulness. Whereupon she immediately replies that, that being so, she will be willful no more. As a result they live happily until she dies and leaves him very rich.¹ This is a very effective example of the dramatic employment of the stage property setting technique.

What, then, is Deloney's contribution to the development of setting technique? He utilizes local topographic detail with an accuracy which makes him an important forerunner of Defoe and Fielding. For the first time in the history of English prose fiction he gives us the rich color of the middle class life which centered around guild activities, - and with such painstaking detail that he reveals to us architectural and decorative peculiarities of the times - and so merits the distinction of being called our first significant local color novelist. He employs historical backgrounds in a less spectacular way than did Nashe but makes a more organic use of them; and so is important in the development of the

¹ Thomas Deloney, op.cit. p.17-18

historical novel and of the historical romance. He taps for the first time an almost inexhaustible source of the picturesque in his utilization of the rich setting and action suggested by local tradition - a strain to be later mined diligently by Scott, and earlier, and to a lesser extent, by Bunyan. He utilizes symbolic setting for the first time in the history of prose fictional realism. He exemplifies the first effective use, in this type of fiction, of 'grave yard' Gothic touches; and continues and develops toward realism the use of heroic personification in setting. In addition to all this, he reveals the inherent value of setting as a means of motivating plot and of producing changes in character attitudes. And by these varying devices, he so utilizes setting as to leave the reader absolutely no doubt concerning the overwhelming probability of his narratives. Deloney is, then, a figure of major proportions in the history of the development of setting.

III

THE PAMPHLETEERS FROM 1600 TO 1660

After Deloney, more than eighty years pass before our next major novelists, Aphra Behn and John Bunyan, produce their first works. In the early part of this period, before the Commonwealth, pamphlet literature continues to be produced in great abundance.

Thomas Dekker

Dekker is here the leading figure. He achieves a conscious use of massed, circumstantial, sensory detail in setting which reaches a new high water mark for unified colorful impression,- a height of artistic achievement in description not to be equalled at least until about 1760 when the so-called Gothic novelists began to give major attention to the problems of setting. Dekker plays upon the senses of his readers, evoking emotional moods with all the technique of the skillful descriptive poet. His achievement in setting, brilliant as it is, is largely confined, however, to the building up of a technique for unified sensory appeal; he makes few attempts to use setting for character or plot motivation, generally being content to set or heighten emotional moods by picturing backgrounds.

Dekker's astounding mastery of artistic technique is made manifest time and time again in his pamphlets. His des-

cription of the plague setting, for instance, far surpasses that made later by Defoe in his famous Journal of The Plague Year. "Echo forth your grones," Dekker says pleadingly to those dead of the distemper, "through the hollow trunk of my pen, and rain down your gummy tears into my ink, that even marble bosomes may be shaken with terror, and hearts of adamant melt into compassion."¹ And truly they seem to have done so.

The following description of London in plague time, as seen by one of the gallants meeting at an ordinary, utilizes effectively, perhaps for the first time in English realistic prose fiction, the technique of stressing a mood by describing those things which by their absence create it :

....there was not so much Velvet stirring, as would haue bene a Couer to a little Booke in Octauo, or seamde a Lieftenants Buffe-doublet; a Frenchhood would haue bene more wondred at in London then the Polonians with their long-tayld Gaberdines, and which was most lamentable, there was neuer a Gilt Spur to be seene all the Strand ouer, neuer a Feather wagging in all Fleetstreete unlesse some Country Fore-horse came by, by meere chaunce, with a Raine-beaten Feather in his Costrell; the streete looking for all the world like a Sunday morning at sixe of the Clocke, three houres before seruice, and the Bells ringing all about London,² as if the Coronation day had bene halfe a yeare long.²

To realize Dekker's superiority over Defoe in description, one need only compare this to the latter's description of a London street in plague time.³ Dekker produces a superior

¹Thomas Dekker, "The Wonderful Year", Bodley Head Quartos VIII:37 (N.Y.; E.P.Dutton and Co.)

²Thomas Dekker, "The Meeting of the Gallants at An Ordinaire", Dekker's Plague Pamphlets, p.116. (Oxford,Clarendon Press,1925)

³See p. 215

sensory impression with a vivid dominant tone.

And he is even more successful in the following description:

....bard up every night in the vast silent charnell house, hung with lamps dimly and slowly burning, in hollow and glimmering corners: where all the pavement should instead of greene bushes, be strewed with blasted rosemary: withered hyacinthes, fatal cipresse and Ewe, thickly mingled with heaps of dead men's bones: the bare ribs of a father that begat him, lying there; here the chaplesse hollow skull of a mother that bore him: round about him a thousand coarses, some standing bolt upright in their knotted winding sheets: others half mouldered in rotten coffins, that shuld suddenly yawn wide open, filling his nostrils with noisesome stench and his eyes with the sight of nothing but crawling worms. And to keep such a poor wretch wakin, he should hear no noise but of a toads croaking, skreetch-owls howling, mandrakes shriking.¹

Here we have vivid detail appealing to the senses of sight, smell and hearing; and so unified as to create an emotional tone far superior to any produced by other pamphleteers. The Gothic 'grave yard' detail, moreover, is handled masterfully. Strangely enough, such setting is used by Dekker to form a background for, and to heighten by contrast, anecdotes touched with - or even given over to - humor. Against the plague background, for instance, he relates the story of the maids who, upon the appearance of a man stricken with the distemper, ran "into the orchard, quivering and quaking, and ready to hang themselves on the innocent plumb-trees (for hanging to them would not be so sore a death as the plague, and to die maids too, O horrible!)"² Or he tells us of the unconscious humor

¹Thomas Dekker, "The Wonderful Year", Bodley Head Quartos VIII:38

²Ibid., p.59-60

of the repentant wife;¹ or of the good fat burgher who, called by maids who were fluttering around a corpse "like a flock of geese," leaped a yard from the corpse "as nimbly as if his guts had been taken out by the hangman":

Out of the house he wallowed presently, being followed with 2 or 3 dozen of napkins to dry up the lard, that ran so fast down his heels that all the way he went was more greasy than a kitchen-stuff-wifes basket : you would have sworn it had been a barrel of Pitch on fire, if you had looked upon him, for such a smokie cloud (by reason of his own fat,hot steam) compassed him round about, that but for his voice he had quite been lost in the stinking mist.²

Dekker's latest use of plague setting (1625) is in the following passage:

Or shall I tell you, that in many Church-yards (for want of roome) they are compelled to dig Graues like little Cellers, piling up forty or fifty in a pit? And that in one place of buriall, the Mattocke and Shouell haue ventured so farre, that the very Common-shore breakes into these ghastly and gloomy Ware-houses, washing the bodies all ouer with foule water, because when they lay down to rest, not one eye was so tender to wet the ground with a teare?³

Here, however, continuous narrative thread has almost ceased to exist, the work being made up of mere paragraph accounts of happenings to individuals at the time of a plague.

But Dekker's success in setting is not confined to the creation of realistic plague atmosphere. His ability to catch the mood of the teeming activity of London life, as

¹Ibid., p.68

²Ibid., p.75-78

³Thomas Dekker, "God's Tokens or a Rod for Run-awaies", Plague Pamphlets, p.159

evidenced by the following descriptions of the reception to Bankruptism and of London street activity, is amazing.

The thing they stood on was a scaffold erected for that purpose, stuck around with a few greene boughs (like an Ale-house booth at a Fair) and covered with two or three threadbare carpets (for prisoners have no better) to hide the unhandsomeness of the carpenter's work: the boughs with the very strong breath that was pressed out of the vulgar, withered and like Autumn leaves dropt to the ground.¹

.....

For in every street carts and coaches made such a thundering as if the world ran upon wheels, at every corner men, women and children meet in such shoales, that posts are set up of purpose to strengthen the houses, lest with justling one another they should shoulder them down. Besides hammers are beating in one place, Tubs hooping in another, Pots clinking in a third, water tankards running at tilt in a fourth: here are porters sweating under burdens, there merchants men bearing bags of money, chapmen (as if they were at Leape-frog) skip out of one shop into another: Tradesmen (as if they were dancing Galliards) are lusty at legs and never stand still: all are as busy as country attorneys at the assizes: how then can idleness think to inhabit here?²

Truly, London comes to life here almost as vividly as does Chicago under the pen of Carl Sandburg, for Dekker, like Sandburg, is a master of sound effects and of verbs of action.

Nor is he less at home in depicting unified rural settings. Looking for an artistic way to introduce Harmon's catalogue of rogues (to which he adds a few of his own - notably horse-traders), he pictures himself as entering:

¹Thomas Dekker, "The Seven Deadly Sins of London", Percy Reprint #4, p.14. (N.Y.: Houghton Mifflin Co.)

²Ibid., p.37-38

....a grove set thicke with trees, which grewe in such order, that they made a perfect circle... The branches of the trees (like so many handes) reached over one another and in their embracements held so fast together, that their boughes made a goodly greene roofe, which being touched by the wind, it was a pleasure to behold so large a Seeling to move; upon every branch sate a consort of singers, so that every tree shewed like a Musicke roome. The floore of this summer-house was paved all over with yellow field flowers, and with white and red daizies, upon which the Sun casting but a wanton eye, you would have sworne the one had been nayles of gold, and the other studdes of enamelled Silver... neither the foote of any man nor the hoofe of any beast had beaten down the grasse; for the blades stood so hie and so even, as if there lengthes had been given them by one measure. The melodie which the birds made, and the varietie of all sorts of fruits which the trees promised, with the prettie and harmless murmuring of a shallow stremme running in windings through the middest of it (whose noyse went like the chime of bels, charming the eyes to sleepe) put me in mind of the garden wherein our Great GrandSyre was the Keeper.¹

Here we have fine color, unity of impression, and a not too heavy touch of the idyllic. Having provided this general locale for a meeting of the vagabonds, Dekker particularizes the preparation for the meeting:

....there was a table readie coverd, with faire linnen, nut browne trenchers lay in good order, with bread, and salt, keeping their state in the middle of the board. The Roome itself was not sumptuous but handsome; of indifferent bigness, but not very large: the windowes were spread with herbes, the chimney dressed up with greene boughs, and the floor strewed with bulrushes, as if some lasse were there that morne to be married.... in the next room.... was there as much stirring as commonly is to be seen in a Booth, upon the first day of the opening of a Fayre. Some sate turning of spits, and the place being all smoaky, made me thinke on hell; for the joynts of meat lay as if they had been broyling in the infernall fire; the turnespits (who were poor, tattered, greasy fellows) looking like so many hee divels. Some were basting and seemed like feindes pouring scalding oyle upon the damned: others were myncing of pye

¹Thomas Dekker, "The Belman of London," Guls Horn-book and Belman of London, p.75-76 (London: J.M.Dent and Sons, 1928)

meats, and showed like hangmen cutting up quarters, whilst another whose eies glowed with the heate of the fire, stood poaking in at the mouth of an oven, torturing soules as it were in the furnace of Lucifer. There was such chopping of herbees, such toasting of ladels, such plucking of geese, such scalding of pigs, such singing, such scolding, such laughing, such swearing, such running to and fro, as if Pluto had that day bidden all his friendes to a feast, and that these had beene the Cookes that drest the dinner.¹

Here he blends action and background in such a way as to produce a perfect and probable setting for the scene which follows,- a scene in which he describes the vagabonds' feast. And this he follows by stories of vagabond tricks, stories he claims to have derived from an old beldame whom he cornered after the banquet broke up. Certainly Dekker's setting for these stories surpasses Chettle's best effort to provide an artistic framework for a collection of narratives.

Dekker is of further importance in the history of setting because he continues and develops the humorous use of mock-heroic setting blended with realistic setting:

....night having put on the vizard that Hell lends her (cald darkness) to leap into her couch.... Candle-light had scarce opend his eye (to looke at the Citty like a gunner shooting at a marke, but fearfully (their feet trembling under them) their eyes suspitiously rowling from every nooke to nooke round about them, and their heads (as if they stood upon oyled skrewes) still turning back behind them, came creeping out of hollow trees, where they lay hidden: a number of couzning Bankrupts in the shapes of Owles, who when the Marshall of light, the sunne, went up and down to searche the Citty, durst

¹Ibid., p. 78-79

not stir abroad, for fear of being hooted at and followed by whole flockes of undon creditors.¹

Besides, by the opinion of all Phylosophers, Physitians, it is not good to trust the aire with our bodies till the Sun with all his flame-coloured wings hath fand auay the misty smoke of the morning, and refined the thick tabacca-breath which the rheumaticke night throwes abroad of purpose to put out the eye of the Element : which worke questionlesse cannot be perfectly finished, till the sunnes Car-horses stand prancing on the very top of the highest noon.²

But if (as it often happens unless the yeare catch the sweating sicknesse) the morning, like charity waxing cold, thrust his frosty fingers into thy bosome, pinching thee black and blew (with his nails made of yce) like an invisible goblin, so that thy teeth (as if thou wert singing pricksong) stand coldly quavering in thy head and leap up and doun like a nimble Jackes of a paire of Virginals : be then as swift as the whirlewinde, and as boystrous in tearing all the cloathes in a rude heape together: with which bundle filling thy armes, steppe barely forth crying: Room, what a coyle keepe you about the fire? The more are set round about it, the more is thy commendation, if thou either bluntly ridest over their shoulders, or tumblest aside their stooles to creepe into the chimney-corner: there toast thy body, till thy scorched skinne be speckled all over, being stained with more motley colours then are to be seene on the right side of the rainebow.³

This use of the burlesqued heroic form to give a humorous twist to realistic description reaches here its highest development before Fielding, who turns it to more dramatic usages.

In formulating, then, Dekker's contribution to the development of English realistic prose setting, we may note his continuation and relative perfection of the mock-heroic

¹Thomas Dekker, "Lanthorne and Candle Light", in Guls Hornbook and Belman of London, p.267

²Thomas Dekker, "Guls Hornbook", In Guls Hornbook and Belman of London, p.22

³Ibid., p.25-26

and of the Gothic 'grave yard' types, his use of settings to produce contrast and to heighten dramatic action by that contrast, his skill in employing setting as a framework for a series of narratives, and his occasional use of setting to influence action (as in his various stories of the plague). His major contribution, however, is the development of a definite artistic technique through which the full richness of sensory detail may be utilized to produce a highly unified impression and a dominant tone which will, by moving the reader emotionally, put him in the mood to feel, and so to live, with the characters of fiction. So we reach a new high in the use of setting to add probability to characterization and narrative. Despite this major achievement of Dekker's, his successors for the next hundred years remain blind to the brilliant emotional effect which, as he so clearly demonstrated, could be obtained from setting artistically created and employed.

From 1610 on to the Restoration there is a marked decrease in the use of setting by Dekker and by the other pamphleteers, and a marked retrogression in technique. This, perhaps, may be partially due to the growing Puritan influence, which may have tended to discourage pamphlet fiction of the picaresque type and to encourage instead the literature of charactery. Three works of the period from 1610 to 1660 are, however, of sufficient significance to call for

attention.

Samuel Rowlands

In 1610 Samuel Rowlands published his Martin Mar-all, in which he continues his practice of giving little more than place names - such as Peticote Lane, Wayhill Fair, a fair tavern at York city - to indicate locales. His account of the Runnagates' Race, however, is of some slight interest to us; in it he utilizes semi-historical folk material, telling the story of John Mortimer and the Robertsmen "at what time King Henry the sixt....bare rule over the Britanes"; but even here his setting is confined to the mention of a "blacke heath" where these men led their Robin Hood existence, and of the names of places at which they stopped on their way to London.¹

William Fennor

William Fennor, who published his Counter's Commonwealth in 1617, is of somewhat greater importance than Rowlands. His account of an arrest and of a stay in debtors' prison may or may not be based on his own experience. He gives us our first fictional jail settings, which, though slight, are still better and more circumstantial than Defoe and Fielding will later provide. After detailing his arrest,

¹Samuel Rowlands, Complete Works, I:44ff. (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1880.)

which he places at a time when he was "walking....in an evening through the City, when the heavens were muffled up in clouds, as many of our young gallants faces are in their cloaks,"¹ he goes on to describe the three wards of the prison. The approach to the Masters' Ward, he says, was through "a little gallery, which led us to a spacious room, and then into a hall hung round about with the story of the Prodigal Child, a very edifying piece of workmanship for the guests of that place"; the sleeping quarters, upstairs, were "richly hung with cob-web lawn" and the beds fitted with "sheets that never came nigh Holland by three hundred mile."² Of his trip through the Knights' Ward, he remarks:

At first I went through a long, dark gallery, that represented the place it was most like - Hell. For it was as gloomy as if the ravenlike wings of night did continually cover it. Having passed through this Egyptian fog, on a sudden I stepped into the Hall, where men were walking up and down, as thick as merchants do on the Exchange between twelve and one during the afternoon.

Here the sleeping quarters were "a privy lodging,-or, indeed, a lodging neighboring nigh a privy, for the chamber stinks worse all the year long than a jakes-farmer's clothes doth at twelve at night....", and had such an effect on him that he got up as soon as "day's roseate fingers had....bored out the eyes of night."³ Of the Hole, the ward for those who had no money to bribe the keepers, Fennor merely says that it "stinks many men to death."⁴ Notable in this description of

¹ William Fennor, "Counter's Commonwealth", in A.V. Judges' The Elizabethan Underworld, p.428

² Ibid., p.431

³ Ibid., p.436-37

⁴ Ibid., p.483

the prison wards are Fennor's semi-humorous employment of heroic setting and his use of comparisons to produce sensory reaction. His primary importance, however, is that he shows the type of atmosphere that Defoe and Fielding sometimes needed, had available, and failed to utilize.

T.(homas) B.(rewer)

The last author of significance to us in this period is T.B. (Thomas Brewer?)¹, who, in 1631, wrote the Life and Death of the Merry Deuill of Edmonton. Claiming to depict the pranks of a real character, he draws on the rich reservoir of folk materials and makes a quite occasional, significant dramatic use of country setting.

Two of his stories make dramatic use of tree settings. The first of these is that of Smug and the nuns : After stealing venison, Smug climbed a tree to escape the keeper of the park.

But sitting there a little while, prying and peeping betweene the branches (like an owl in an ivy bush), he spied the mother nun of Chestone, with three or four young ones (attired in white long robes, with railes and tip-pets, as they used to wear), comming towards him, with a little bell rung before them, sprinkling holy water, and praying upon their beads very devoutly....The very sight of these holy creatures made Smug quiver, quake, and shake like the leaues of the tree he sat upon, for he thought verrily they had beene Spirits, Furies, or Hob-goblins that had come hither a purpose to carry him away for stealing of venison.

¹ Library call-cards, including the one in the Library of Congress General Book Index, give this identification as a conjecture.

When they had passed, "very lightly (from knot to knot), got he from the toppe of the tree, thinking to have to his fel-lowes that stayed for him, but by the time he was gotten down from the bowes to the roote, the Nuns was turned backe againe upon him." So he ran to them "pawing and bawling" as though he would have rent his wind-pipe to cry he'd never steal again. But they, even more alarmed than he, ran away rapidly.¹ The second tree-setting story is that of Master Peter's chastisement of a friar: Master Peter Fabell, hiding in a hollow tree, called out to a friar dallying with a wench: "Hee that sees thee now, unseene of thee, sees at all times, in all places, and all these thy actions."² When they, thinking his voice the voice of God, cried out for mercy, he ordered that for pennance they ask the next man who came by to whip them through town. Then Peter "stept out of the hollow tree, and went (very cunningly) round about in the back side of the hedge, and came directly upon them, as if he meant to pass by them." They fell on their knees, and begged him to execute the pennance and so save their souls; so, binding them

¹T.B., Life and Death of the Merry Deuell of Edmonton, p.20-21 (London: J.Nichols and Sons, 1819)

²Note that in Peter's address to the friar he closely follows Greene's language in his story of the conversion of a courtezan. Strangely enough, Donne also seems to have borrowed Greene's language for a sermon: "...that that God, who hath often looked upon me in my foulest uncleanlinesse, and when I have shut out the eye of the day, the Sunne, and the eye of Night, the taper, and the eyes of all the world, with curtaines and windows and doores, did yet see me and see me in mercy, by making me see that he saw me, and sometimes brought me to a present remorse..." (Complete Poetry and Selected Prose, edited by John Heyward, p.633.)

together with a rod of willow, he drove them through town, constantly berating them.¹ Both these stories reveal simple but dramatic use of the 'stage property' type of setting.

In two other stories T.B. makes rather vivid utilization of inn settings. The first of these relates how the drunken Smug tried to arm himself with the shadow of an inn sign: He staggered out of an ale house, crying for revenge.

This reeling infirmity threw poor Smug from poste to poste and from wall to wall; here he knockt his face against one stocke, there against another, till halfe the wilde blood in his body was runne out at his nose. Still he staggered, till he came to a seat (neare his home) under the sign of the Sword and Buckler.... it was a faire mooneshine night, and the shadowe of the signe he sate under seemed to him to be no lesse then that it came off the very sword and buckler that hung over his head unseene or unthought of.

So, in a spirit of revenge, he reached out to grasp the sword, fell flat on his face, and slept thus till morning.² The second of these stories relates how Smug made use of his knowledge of inns to outwit grounds-keepers who wanted to arrest him for poaching : Pursued by the keepers, he ran toward an inn where "he spied the signe of the White Horse (not painted upon a board, as they used to be heare in the city), but fashioned out of the timber and set gallantly ouer the signe post"; got up on the White Horse, and made another St. George Inn there in Edmonton by stretching out his hammer

¹T.B., op.cit., p.9-11

²Ibid., p.15

instead of a sword and tying the tippet of his red cap under his chin. As the result of his action, when the keepers arrived they saw two St. George Inns opposite one another, and decided that they were lost.¹ In both of these stories, part of the setting is used dramatically to further the action.

Still another story by T.B. relates how Smug was made to consider himself the devil : His companions carried him, quite thoroughly drunk, "into the church porch; and there laid him all along on his backe upon a bench. Under his head (instead of a cushion or a pillow) they put a cricket, or a little joint stoole (such as children used to sit on in the chimney corner) and under his feete, a great rough-hewed free stone." When he continued to sleep, they blacked his face. Later, waking, he staggered home, followed by children who threw stones and called him the Devil. Then, when his wife had showed him his face in a "glassee" in order to explain his experience to him, he swore she was showing him the devil to frighten him, boasted of his courage, and, fighting with 'the devil', smashed the glass. Even after she showed him the empty frame, he continued to demand that she produce the devil so that the fight could go on.² Here we have not only the dramatic use of stage properties to produce humorous contrast,

¹Ibid., p.44

²Ibid., p.39-42

but also another instance¹ of the utilization of the mirror, a device on its way to becoming a traditional part of the stage property type of fictional setting.

T.B.'s last story of interest to us here relates how Smug outwitted his wife. Locked in his room by her to prevent his going carousing,

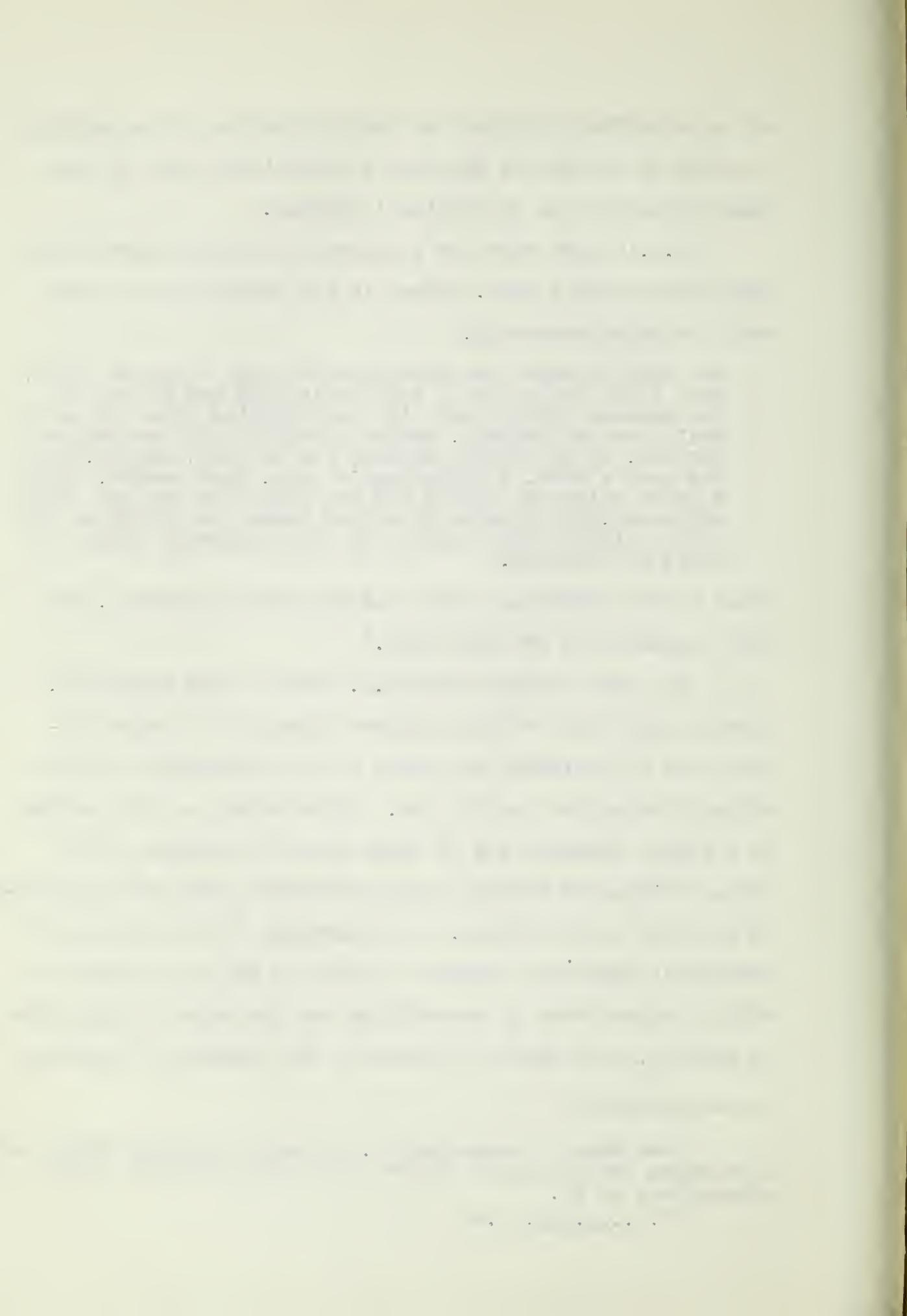
he tooke an empty can that stood by upon a little table, tyed it to the end of a long string, and put it out at his chamber window, where it hung dangling like the poore men's bore at Ludgate, and he himself, like the bawling boreman, stood peeping through his lattice, crying, For the Lord's sake, for the Lord's sake, good people, pitty a poore prisoner; making his can daunce at the end of his whip-cord, with drawing it up and downe, as nimblly as one of the little thred puppits in the lamentable motion of Diues and Lazarus.

Vexed by the gathering crowd that this show attracted, his wife consented to let him loose.²

All these stories from T.B. utilize folk materials, showing that their author realized (though to a lesser extent than did Deloney) the value of such materials for providing distinctive local color. These tales are also marked by a highly dramatic use of stage property setting - only those articles of setting being introduced that can be employed directly in the action. The importance of this is that it shows that immediate dramatic utility in the plot action is still a major force in determining the inclusion or exclusion of setting, that Dekker's lesson in the technique of setting

¹ See Nashe's usage, page 27. We shall also find Defoe and Richardson employing the device, and Behn and Steele using adaptations of it.

² T.B., op.cit., p. 47



has gone unheeded. Because of this trend, then, we shall not be too surprised when we find that, as late as Fielding, there is a distrust of - or at least a disinclination to use - detailed descriptive setting in well-plotted narration.

IV

RICHARD HEAD AND FRANCIS KIRKMAN

Throughout the years of the Commonwealth, narrative fiction lay quiescent. But five years after the Restoration, Richard Head brought out his The English Rogue, Described in the Life of Meriton Latroon, a Witty Extravagant. Being a Compleat History of the Most Eminent Cheats of Both Sexes. And in 1671 Francis Kirkman, claiming falsely to be collaborating with Head (who reputedly refused to continue because his reputation had suffered too greatly from the publication of his book) published The English Rogue, Parts II and III. These books, which are largely made up of stories of rogues rather artificially bound together by the presence of a central hero to whom other rogues can tell their tales, represent the final decadent flowering of the type started by Harmon and continued by Greene, Dekker, and the other pamphleteers. The stories of Head and Kirkman, and especially of the latter, are often shameless borrowings from Harmon and his successors, capitalizing largely on racy tales of the fabliau type, tales which, however, have extremely slight literary merit from the standpoint of characterization, setting or narrative skill. Taken as a whole, they fully deserve the obloquy heaped on them by students of narrative fiction. Nevertheless, the work of Head - and to a much lesser extent

of Kirkman - has at rare intervals considerable literary merit and is of an historical importance which has been generally overlooked.

Analysis of Head's Work

In his part of The English Rogue Head makes use of two types of material which make him of considerable importance in the history of English setting : the first Irish local color in English fiction, and some English local color; and travel-book material, which is employed at times as skillfully though far less extensively than that of Defoe.

Considering first Head's use of Irish-English locales, it is well to note that he drew from his own boyhood experience the account of his hero's flight in infancy from Ireland at the time of the Rebellion of 1641. In recounting his infancy, Latroon says:

Four years after my Birth, the Rebellion began so unexpectedly, that we were forced to flee in the night, the light from our flaming Houses, Ricks of Hay, and Stacks of Corn guided us out of the Town [Knockfergus, Ireland] and our Fears soon conveyed us to the Mountains.... Thus without Shoes or Stockings, or the least Rag to cover our nakedness, with the help of our Guide, we travelled all Night through Woods as obscure as that black darkness that then environed our Horizon. By break of day we were at Belfast.¹

This account, though slight, employs realistic setting vividly to heighten the narrative by intensifying the mood of terror. Later, Head has Latroon, now grown to manhood, return to Ireland and describe its squalor with all the scorn of

¹Richard Head, The English Rogue, I:8,10 (London:nn, 1874) All references are to this edition unless otherwise indicated.

the Englishman who, having once been driven from Ireland, delights in heaping contempt on it:

A little way from Baltinglass I took up my quarters for that night. The Inn I lay in was one story high, about the height of an extraordinary Pigsty, and there was one chimney in it too, more than there is to be found in one of an 100 such Hovils.... I bid [the inn-keeper] set up my Horse by signs, (for that was the language we conversed in) but alass there was no other Stable but what was at the end of our Kitchen; our Dining Room, Bed-chamber, Pigsty, Pantry and Buttery, being all one, without distinction or separation. Some few Wattles (as they call them) were placed above, that was our Hay-loft. The only door of our Inn was a large hurdle, much like a sheep-pen.

Latroon continues by relating that they brought him for dinner "in a Wooden Platter a great many leeks, in the bottom whereof was a good quantity of Bay-salt, and withal a loaf as black as if the Meal had been wetted with ink," and that they gave it to him, saying: "Seest thou tere, Chreest himself nor St. Patrick did ever eat better ting." He could not forbear smiling, which put the housewife in a great passion. After he had conveyed the food to his boots, and rejected a dirty pipe "an inch long" and drink which "there was no swallowing without chewing" , he called for a bed.

In a little while in came a lusty wench with a bundle of rushes on her head, my bed it seemed by the sequel, which she spreading on the ground, covered them with a Caddow or Rug. Here I must lye or no where, patience was my onely comfort,- wherefore stripping myself to my drawers and stockings, I laid myself down. About two hours after came in two Cows, three or four Piggs, some Ducks and Geese (which they brought not in before, out of civility to me). All their family being within doors; the good man, his

Wife, and two Daughters, stripping themselves stark naked, lay down together by my side, which seem'd somewhat strange to me. I could hardly forbear the two young ones, but that my late misfortune was so fresh in my memory.¹

Head also utilizes simple Irish setting in a story which, if characteristically salacious, nevertheless is quite vivid. He relates how Latroon, coming to Balle-more-Eustace, "a little beyond the Town (which is in the County of Wicklow)" where "there is a small river in the summer-time not above knee deep," saw a beautiful blonde wading the stream with her clothes pulled up to her waist. Though she did not understand his pidgin Irish, he finally "got her into a small Wood in which the thicke and spreading tops of the trees seemed to lay their heads together in conspiracy to keep not only the Sun's entry, but also the curious search of any mortal eye." Here she permitted him to kiss her, and to make what he calls "the Preludiums of what should follow". But he was mistaken in her intention because, as he explains, Irish dispositions are much different from English: she cried out "Whillallalloo"- which was immediately re-echoed; and three fellows appeared and beat him thoroughly.² Here, while the detail of setting is far less distinctively Irish than in the preceding scene, there is enough of it to lend probability to the story.

As has already been hinted, Head relates how Latroon

¹Ibid., I:233-34

²Ibid., I:230

as a child, was forced to find refuge in England, there to be brought up. The English descriptive settings are few. Head is generally content to mention place names - Long Well by Christ Church, Fleet-yard, Ratcliff Highway, Woodstreet at the Kings Head, Fish-street, Newington Butts, Paternoster Row, Bow-lane, East-cheap, Whetstones Park - and to add mere generic terms - a well-furnished room, a boarding school, a cobbler's stall, an ale house, a barber's shop - to form locales for his hero's adventures; though, in doing this, he does show a rather minute acquaintance with London.

On two or three occasions, however, he produces definitely descriptive settings. The first of these pertains to Latroon's arrival in England after his flight from Ireland:

....we landed in the West of England, at a place called Barnstable in the Country of Devon....we were forced to go from thence to Plymouth, so called from the River Plime, unto which the Town adjoyneth : at that time it was strongly fortified by new raiz'd Works, a Line being cast about it, besides places of strength antiently built; as the Castle, the Fort of an hundred pieces of Ordnance, that commands Cat-water, and overlooks the Sound, Mount-Batten, and the islands in the Sound, well-furnished with Men and great Guns impregnable.¹

This use of actual setting adds to our growing belief in the probability of this part of Head's narrative.

In another scene Latroon tells how, later, he ran away from his mother and spent a year with gypsies. To provide a setting for this escapade, Head employs the heroic in contrast to humble rural setting, without, however, any definite

¹Ibid., I:18

touch of humor: After spending the first night away from home with "no other thing to lie on but a Haycock, and no other Coverlid but the Canopy of Heaven", Latroon awakened;

as then the early Larke, the winged Herald of the morning, had not with her pretty warbling notes, summon'd the bright watch-men of the Night to prepare for a retreat; neither had Aurora opened the Vermillion Oriental Gate, to make room for Sols radiant Beams, to dissipate that gloomy darkness that had muffled up our Hemisphere in obscurity.

Latroon spent the day feeding on berries, and the second night in a barn where, "peeping out from the straw" he saw the gypsies come in, and later joined them.¹ As we have already seen, this joining of the heroic to the realistic was utilized by Chettle, Deloney, and Dekker; and we shall later see it used by Kirkman and brought to perfection by Fielding.

In still another scene Head utilizes the picture-set custom (already used by Deloney, and later to be employed by Addison, Richardson, and Fielding) in describing a "new fashion Bawdy-house in London":

She showed me the way up one pair of stairs, into a very large and fair Dining Room hung with rich Tapistry, and adorned round with excellent Pictures, the Effigies of divers Ladies (as I took them to be) renouned and celebrated in all ages, for the fairest and most beautiful of that sex.

Latroon much admired one of these ladies, describing her as follows:

She hath a full large front, her archt eye-brows are thick and black, without any stragling hairs; her eyes are of the

¹Ibid., I:34-35

same color, and by their intuitive faculty seem to penetrate that which they look on; passing her cheeks, which carry in them an excellent air, and her nose, which is neither too long nor too short, view her lips, whose plumpness and redness resemble a double cherry; and then for the dimples of her cheeks and chin, I could make them the subject of a whole day's discourse...

And before he could finish his description, the beauty appeared in the flesh - certainly a dramatic utilization of the picture-set custom.¹

Turning now to Head's use of travel-book materials, which makes him an important forerunner of Behn and Defoe, we find him quite adept in employing tropical local color with an intermingling of wondrous phenomena, something which Aphra Behn has generally been credited with first introducing into narrative fiction. He gives us, for instance, the following description of Do-Cerne or Mauritius:

....is an Isle situate within the torrid Zone, close by the Tropick of Capricorn; but it is very uncertain unto what part of the world it belongs, participating both of America, and bending toward the Asiatic Seas, from India to Java. This Isle aboundeth with what the use of man shall require. The landing, looking out at Sea, is Mountainous: the circuit of this Island is about an hundred miles; it procreates an healthy and nourishing air; the great quantity of ever flourishing and fragrant trees, doth no less lenify the burning heat, when the Sun enters into Capricorn, as helped by the sweet mollifying breath of the North-west winde, when Sol again adheres to Cancer.... Water here is plentiful, drilling itself from the high rocks and trickling down into the valleys, spreads itself into various Meanders, till those sweet and pleasant waters disembogue themselves into the lap of the salt Ocean. There is so great a quantity of wood, that we could hardly procure passage. But of those many various Trees, we found

¹Ibid., I: 378-79

none so beneficial to us as the Palmeto: this Tree is long, straight, and very soft, having neither leaves, boughs, or branches, save at the top, whereon there is soft pith, wherein consists the sole vegetative of that Tree; which cut out, the Palmeto in a very short time expires. Its taste is much like the kernel of an Hazel-nut; boiled, it is like Cabbage. But the chiefest commodity that this Tree produceth, is the wine that issueth from it, pleasant, and as nourishing as Muscadine or Alligant.... Another Tree, which tastes.... like Vitriol, a spirit of Salt.... is a comely tree to look on, but brings forth not anything that is good: this Tree is in a manner naked too, and the body thereof as soft and penetrable, as new Cheese.... There is another Tree, which beareth a cod full of sharp prickles, wherein lies hid a round fruit, in form of a Doves-egg; crack it, and therein contain'd you shall finde a kernel, pleasant in taste, but poysous in its operation.

Among the wonders mentioned in the same passage are bats "as large as Goshawks"; dodoes "for rareness of shape contending with the Arabian Phoenix," and having round, fat bodies, weighing about twenty pounds; cowfish with heads like elephants, small eyes, bodies "at full growth about three yards long and one broad," exceedingly little fins, and flesh tasting like veal; flying fish; dolphins; sharks; and tortoises "so great that they creep with two men's burdens on their backs" but whose pace is so slow "that they would make but ill Porters, going not above ten yards in two hours, when they make their greatest speed."¹ All this local color is rich in detail, and is at least as effective as much of that used by Behn and by Defoe. Furthermore, the so-called circumstantial method made famous by Defoe is well on its way to development here: the most minute details are massed and connected in the

¹Ibid., I:446-450

narrative with such naturalness that the reader accepts as probable things that, occurring singly, would arouse his skepticism.

Head is also, at times, at least as skillful as Behn and Defoe at their best in utilizing travel-book, local color material in the narrative. Sometimes he introduces it simply by having his characters make a routine use of it:

Our usual pastime [in Bantam] was to go up a little small River (joining to the Town) four or five miles to wash ourselves: the trees so covered it over like an Arbor, that the beams of the Sun could not penetrate it; by which means it was fine and cool, which very much refreshes our parched bodies. I never came ashore, but I drank very immediately of Punce, Rack, Tea, etc. which was brought up in very great China-Jugs holding at least two quarts: with every such Jug there was brought in a Dish of Sweet-meats, not of one sort, but variety, and excellent good, for which we paid a shilling English...¹

At other times - and here I think him superior to Behn and at least equal to Defoe at his best - he makes his local color dynamic, with the result that the action is dominated by it. One instance of this is his relation of how, to escape merciless Turk pirates near Lagor, East Indies, the sailors leapt into the sea and

wading up to the waste in mud, landed in safety; with these [Latroon continues] I hid myself in the next adjacent Wood.... Considering with ourselves that the place was moorish, and full of venomous creatures, we betook ourselves to the Owze, standing therein up to the middle. The next morning, by break of day, we went along by the River-side, until we came to a little Channel, which we durst not pass (not knowing the depth) for fear of Lizards,

¹Ibid., I:459

plenty whereof we had sight of therein; we wandered so long to avoid this and the Bogs covered with rushes, which environed us about, till we were forced to rest ourselves.¹

From this predicament they were rescued by natives, whose customs are described at considerable length. Another instance of Head's dynamic use of local color is found in his utilization of a volcano: Darkness setting in suddenly, sailors cast anchor for fear they might run foul of some rock or shelf, and saw the nearby sky seemingly lit up by flashes of fire. Next morning, sorely needing water, they landed. Their curiosity aroused by a fire-belching hill, they decided to climb it. Head relates what ensued, as follows:

....with much difficulty we came so nigh the top, that we heard a most hideous noise proceeding from the Concave thereof.... Whilst we were thus in a delirium, not knowing what was best to be done, the Mountain was instantly possessed by an Ague-fit, and afterwards vomiting up smoke and stones into the Air (which afterwards fell down in a shower upon our heads) we thought we could not escape without a miracle; and whilst we were all striving which way, with greatest expedition, we might eschew the danger, there rose in the midst of us such a heap of earth, ashes and fire, with such kinde of combustible matter as that we all seem'd as so many movable burning Beacons....my companions making more haste than good speed, tumbling down the hill before me, fell several of them together, which blocks lying in my way, obstructed my passage, and so saved the breaking of my neck, which otherwise would have been inevitable. In this prodigious conflict, most of us lost the hair of our heads, not without receiving several batteries upon the Out-works of our bodies.²

In this last passage, Head brings in a wonder quite cleverly,

¹Ibid., I:424-25

²Ibid., I:451-52

making it not merely a side-show - as Defoe usually does - but really fusing it with the action.

Also equal, if not superior, to Defoe, is Head, at times, in his depiction of sea-storm scenes, probably composed from travel-book materials:

Shipwreck off Isle of Man

In two days time we set sail (from Holy-head): we had not ran above three Leagues before the Sky darkened; the Wind blew hard at a South-East, and the Waves rose mountain high.... about three a clock in the morning we heard a hideous noise occasioned by the beating of the Sea against the Rocks, which was echoed by the loud and lamentable cries of the Seamen.... Now could I pray heartily, that had never prayed in my life before: but my Devotion was soon spoiled, for the Ship struck in between two Rocks. I lookt out, and methought the dashing of the waves lookt perfectly like flashes of Fire. Here she stuck a little while, which gave five of us opportunity to leap upon a Rock: we were no sooner there, before a wave fetchd her off, but brought her on again, and split her all to pieces. We five in the meantime riding astride on a Rock behind one another, like so many criminals on a Woodden-horse.... At last the hindermost could hold no longer, but crying, Lord, have mercy on my Soul, committed himself to the merciless Sea. Immediately came a tumbling sea and washt off the next; now did I expect that every Wave would prove my Executioner.... Day broke, so that we could discern we were not a coits cast from Shore, and that the Sea was ebbing. We waited not above an hour before we crawled to Shore, for go we could not, our joynts were so benumb'd by the cold. We got upon the Beach, and could discern a little way distant a small Cottage.¹

Shipwreck When Being Transported As Slave

We were left in a wide Ocean, which did not at that time wear a smooth brow, but contending with the wind, swell'd into prodigious mountains, which every moment threatened our overwhelming.... The waves indeed carried us up to Heaven,

Zam jam tacturos sidera summa putes
Neptune sure at this time was very gamesome, for he play'd at Tennis with us poor mortals, making a wave his Racket

¹Ibid., I:212

to bandie us up and down like Balls: Sometimes he seem'd so proud and lofty, being raised so high, as if he had been about to scale Heaven; which the incensed Diety perceiving, seemed again to throw us down headlong to Hell, for too much ambition and presumption.... In this moment of death, when we were without the least expectation of any deliverance, the wind chopt about, and drove back one Ship that had overrun us: this was unquestionable Digitus Dei. This ship made toward us, and we, what in us lay, towards it: The wind blew hard, and the insulting Sea, which will not admit of pity, rose high upon us: so that we were forced to lave the water out of the boats with our hats.... But now began another despair; for with all our endeavors we could not reach the Ship, nor she us, although she hung on the Lee to retard her course. Thus our pregnant hopes brought forth nothing but wind and water (for the ship rode on furiously before the wind, and we came after in pursuit of her, as slowly as if an hedge-hog had been running with a Race-horse;).... Now did it grow dark, whereby we could not see which way to row....; but redoubling our strength, we breake through the waves, and by the assistance of a light, which was in the Ship, we directed our course truly. [After all the rest were taken aboard] by good hap they threw me out a Cope: which I held fast, to keep the Boat from staving off. Our Boat was half full of water, and the Waves dasht so violently against the Ship-side, that every stroke struck me down, so that I had like to have been drowned (and did much fear of it) in that epitome of the Sea.... The second night after our deliverance.... about one a clock we were forced to use all hands aloft, a most terrible storm beginning to arise, and the wind blew so furiously, that before morning we lost our Bow-sprit and Mizon; we durst not bear the least sayl, but let the Ship drive whither the winde and waves pleased; and before the next night, we could not endure our remaining Masts standing, but were necessitated to cut them by the board. Thus we tumbled up and down for four days, and as many nights, contending with the waves in a Pitcht-battel, not knowing where we were, till our Ship struck so violently against a Rock, that the horrid noise thereof would have even made a dead man startle; to which add the hideous cries of the Seamen, bearing a part with the whistling winds and roaring Sea; all which together, seemed to me to be the truest Representation of the Day of Judgement. The Ship stuck fast so long between two Rocks, as that we had time, all of us, to leap out; the only means left for our

safety. We all got upon a Rock, and the Morning-star having drawn the Curtain of the night, we found we were but a very little distance from the shore.¹

These scenes are certainly more detailed, more colorful, and achieve a far greater and more unified emotional tone than any except the very best of those that we shall later find it possible to cite from Defoe. Furthermore, the details of the storm are as skillfully made one with the narrative action as they are by Defoe at his best.

Analysis of Kirkman's Work

Head's continuator, Francis Kirkman, accomplishes little, in his two volumes of The English Rogue, of any significance in a study of setting, or indeed of any literary significance. And his The Unlucky Citizen Experimentally Described (1673) adds nothing to his reputation. For the most part his settings are merely generic, and there are fewer place names than in Head's volume. Kirkman does, however, antedate Defoe in his occasional, minute use of details of latitude and longitude, direction, time, distance, and depth of water to give verisimilitude to his narrative:

We espied Hippins Island Eastward ten leagues off, having steer'd all night West south west. Latitude about 6 Degrees 38 and Longitude from South-salt-hil 6 Degrees 44 West, the wind at south-east with the help of a Currant for 24 hours, from the sixteen to the twenty-ninth of this month, we had winds between the south east and east north east, with most intolerable rains at Noon, being in latitude 11 degrees 35 West, the variation about 12 Degrees 35

¹Ibid., I:412-18

Westerly; we sailed this month on several Courses, four hundred ninety six miles.¹

.....

On the sixth day we steer'd East and by North, till four in the afternoon, at which time we saw Land, it was low and sandy banks, with some Trees, and a white Tower or Church which may be seen four or five leagues off.²

.....

The weather was gusty with much rain, but never did I hear such peals of Thunder, nor see such great and continued flashes of Lightning; at four in the evening the next day we anchor'd at eighteen fathom within five leagues of Damon, the wind at North North East, and variable, with such terrible claps of Thunder and Lightning, that my friendswould have freely parted with all they had to have been at the bottom of a Cornish Tinn-mine....On the twenty fifths evening we anchored in ten fathom reddish clay....the next day the wind being at North, North-west, we turn'd up and anchored in ten fathom, the Toddy-trees East and by North per Compass.

Lastly, having laid one buoy on the tongue of the sand and another on the point of the Main, we came over the Barr, the least water is four fathom and half at half flood, so we ran in till the Souther-Toddy-tree bore South and by East per Compass, and there anchored in eight fathom water. This month we sailed not above one Hundred and seven Leagues.³

This linking of latitude, time, distance and weather details becomes later an important part of Defoe's circumstantial method, and is obviously a common heritage from travel-book materials.

Kirkman also once uses the idyllic and the heroic in such a way as to emphasize, by contrast, humble rural setting:

¹Ibid., III:280-81

²Ibid., III:286

³Ibid., III:288-89 . For other illustrations see III: 282, 286, 302, 303.

The country, therefore, I pitched upon, invited thereunto the more it being the merry month of May, the pleasantest time of all the year, the earth then having put on her richest apparel, the meadow clothed in green, the fields beautified with flowers, and the woods adorned with violets, cowslips, and primroses; the winged choristers of the forest, warbled forth their ditties very harmoniously, the lambs frisked and leapt, dancing lavaltos on the flowry pastures; and the murmuring stream made a noise like to a chime of bells running through their winding Meanders.

....on a sudden the welkin began to roar, and sent forth terrible peals of thunder, the serene sky was overshadowed, and Phoebus hid his head behind a cloud, the heavens began first to weep small tears, afterwards to pour them in full rivulets upon the sleepy earth....

At length I spied by the corner of a wood a little thatched cottage,and found by an old rotten stick that darted out of it, in imitation of a signpost, that it was an alehouse.¹

So Kirkman forms another link in a tradition developed by Chettle, Deloney, Dekker and Head.

Conclusions

In summing up the contributions of Head and Kirkman to the development of English setting, we may credit Head with being the first to make any utilization of the Irish scene (thus establishing himself as a minor predecessor of Maria Edgeworth), with employing one or two minor bits of English locale with some dramatic effectiveness, and with using London place names extensively. Perhaps his greatest importance, however, lies in his employment of travel-book local color quite effectively for the first time, surpassing at times

¹Francis Kirkman, The English Rogue, II:336-37
(London: George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., 1928) (This edition used only for II)

(but infrequently and without any consistency) the best efforts of Behn and all but the best efforts of Defoe in utilizing such material effectively in the narrative action; and in his creation and narrative utilization of storm scenes that have better unity of tone and are better fused with the narrative than all but the best of those of Defoe. The reader should keep in mind, however, that Head's achievement must be discounted if we consider his English Rogue as a whole, and pass judgment of its sum-total effectiveness; while at times he equals Behn and Defoe, his successes are far too infrequent to compensate for the long stretches of tedious third-rate narrative, and while his settings vitalize and make convincing occasional sections of his narrative, they do not occur often enough or consistently enough to begin to counter-balance his defects. Both Behn and Defoe outstrip him immeasurably in their ability to write sustained narrative convincingly. Professor Baker is certainly too disparaging of Head, however, when he remarks that his work is "of no historical importance"¹ except to show how far the novel had fallen since Nashe, Deloney, and Dekker.

Kirkman's only claim to fame in the history of setting is his introduction of numerous nautical measurements, details of weather, and so forth, to give credibility to

part of his narrative, a trick which Defoe was later to employ extensively, and which Swift was to burlesque delightfully in Gulliver's Travels.

It may be well to note here that, in developing his circumstantial method, Defoe employed the minute travel-book local color already tapped by Head and Behn, and Kirkman's latitude-time-distance-weather condition-place linking technique; there is little doubt, however, that Defoe arrived at the combination through his own study of travel book materials, and that he was not directly indebted to either Head or Kirkman.¹

¹A.W.Secord,Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe, p.88 (University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol.X, 1924)

V

JOHN BUNYAN

Five years after the publication of Kirkman's volumes of The English Rogue, John Bunyan, then in prison, was writing the life of the English Christian, in allegorical form. Two books could hardly differ more than Pilgrim's Progress and The English Rogue. Yet Bunyan has a just claim to be considered in a study of the development of realistic prose setting.

Theories Concerning Setting in Pilgrim's Progress

Most scholars are in complete agreement that the two main sources of Pilgrim's Progress are the Bible and Bedfordshire. As Powys well says concerning Bunyan:

The Bible and Bedfordshire - in those words we have the sources from which he drew all his inspiration; the grave, formidable sentences of the old Authorized Version working upon the imagination of a countryman whose days had for their background the familiar pastoral landscape of seventeenth century England with its fields and elm trees, its church steeples and turnpike alehouses. Every incident of his desperate spiritual struggles has for its setting some scene from the unsophisticated visible world that he knew so well. Indeed, he could never rid his hungry, religion-haunted mind of the conception that the commonest pastimes of the old-world village of Elstow were actually taking place under the unclosing and awful eye of God.¹

This is the secret of Bunyan's use of setting. From the time when, hearing some women talk cheerfully of religion, he

¹Llewelyn Powys, "John Bunyan", Thirteen Worthies, p. 107-108. (London: Grant Richards, Ltd., 1924)

dared not put it to the test by trying to dry up puddles by faith and was plagued by waking dreams of those women sitting on the sunny side of a mountain and himself separated from them by a wall with a small narrow opening, his abnormal imagination, stimulated as was Cowper's by contemplation of the almost insurmountable difficulties of the Christian way, transformed all he saw in Bedfordshire. For a period of years, as Lowes remarks¹, the roads and by-paths of Bedfordshire were haunted for him by invisible, importunate presences; an experience of such poignancy as his stamped its setting indelibly upon his brain, and even when tranquillity had been obtained, if at a summons the old setting came back to memory, it came back charged with the latent intensity of original experience; so man-eating giants and fire-breathing dragons blend in Pilgrim's Progress with the known and familiar landscape which had once been peopled for him by far more dreadful personages. As Blatchford reminds us:

Bunyan was a man of abnormal imagination. His imagination was vivid, active, flaming, Dantean. It gave light - often lurid light, and heat, and form, and color to all he saw. It made his thoughts stand out in blazing, sun-bright relief, or sink into seas of gloomy shadow; it gave glory, and sweetness, and celestial tone to all his joys, and put cruel edge and piercing point on all his sorrows. He was a nervous man too, one whose soul-harp was strung high, answerable in quivers of pain, and shrieking sharps of repulsion to every jar or discord; and his conscience was a lynx-eyed tyrant, unsleeping and remorseless.... That which he wrote he believed. Had he not lived it? ²

¹J.L.Lowes, Essays in Appreciation, p.57,69
(N.Y.:Houghton Mifflin Co.,1936)

²Robert Blatchford, My Favorite Books, as quoted by F.M.Harrison in Tercentenary Edition of John Brown's Bunyan, p.289-90 (London:Hulbert Publishing Co.,1928)

Bunyan's mind drew its symbols from familiar objects that had become saturated with symbolic value - a symbolic value tied up with his religious experience, and with which he fused his vivid literal vision of Biblical wonders. To him, all the sights and sounds of nature were associated with this or that religious experience, with this or that Biblical story.

Pour un homme convaincu comme l'était Bunyan de la vérité littérale du texte sacré il ne peut y avoir entre les Levres Saints des Hébreux et son propre temps aucun recul historique, aucune nécessité d'adaptation ni d' [sic] interprétation. Le même phénomène de concomitance se retrouve d'ailleurs dans la culture classique. Dans la campagne du Bedfordshire, Bunyan voyait les buissons ardents, les colonnes de feu, les mâchoires d'ane, les yeux divins percant les nuées comme les peintres de la Renaissance voyaient les nymphes et les satires dans la campagne italienne ou Racine dans les eaux de la Seine. Dans les deux cas la mythologie sacrée ou profane venait se juxtaposer à la réalité sans écran intermédiaire.¹

Thus, in Pilgrim's Progress, the familiar landscape is transformed at one moment into an apocalyptic wonder of fire and fiends or into a Beulah land of milk and honey; and at other times it is just itself. Yet such is Bunyan's art that we are not surprised at encountering giants, satyrs and hobgoblins by way of pleasant English lanes, meadows and stiles; even the description of the dwelling places of these creatures is struck through with details characteristic of the English countryside, though they have been transformed, intensified, and heightened by Bunyan's imagination, which has superimposed

¹Maurine Lanoire, "John Bunyan", La Revue de Paris, XXXV-XXXVI: 369-70. 15 nov. 1928

on them details of Biblical scenes. So Pilgrim's Progress is an English flower, and Christian journeys over a countryside, which though generalized and heightened to give concreteness to place-symbols of a spiritual pilgrimage, is redolent of Bedfordshire. Indeed, as Speight says, "Bunyan's writings are so full of local color as to be a valuable source for the student of his period."¹ So skillful is Bunyan, moreover, in the description and utilization of this setting that Macaulay has insisted that the turnstiles and declivites of Pilgrim's Progress are as well known to us as the sights of our own streets,² and that Saintsbury has commended "the vividness and sufficiency of the scene painting and setting" and remarked that one knows the locales of Pilgrim's Progress "as one knows the country one has walked over and perhaps even better"; he adds: "There is no description for description's sake: yet nothing is wanting of the descriptive kind."³

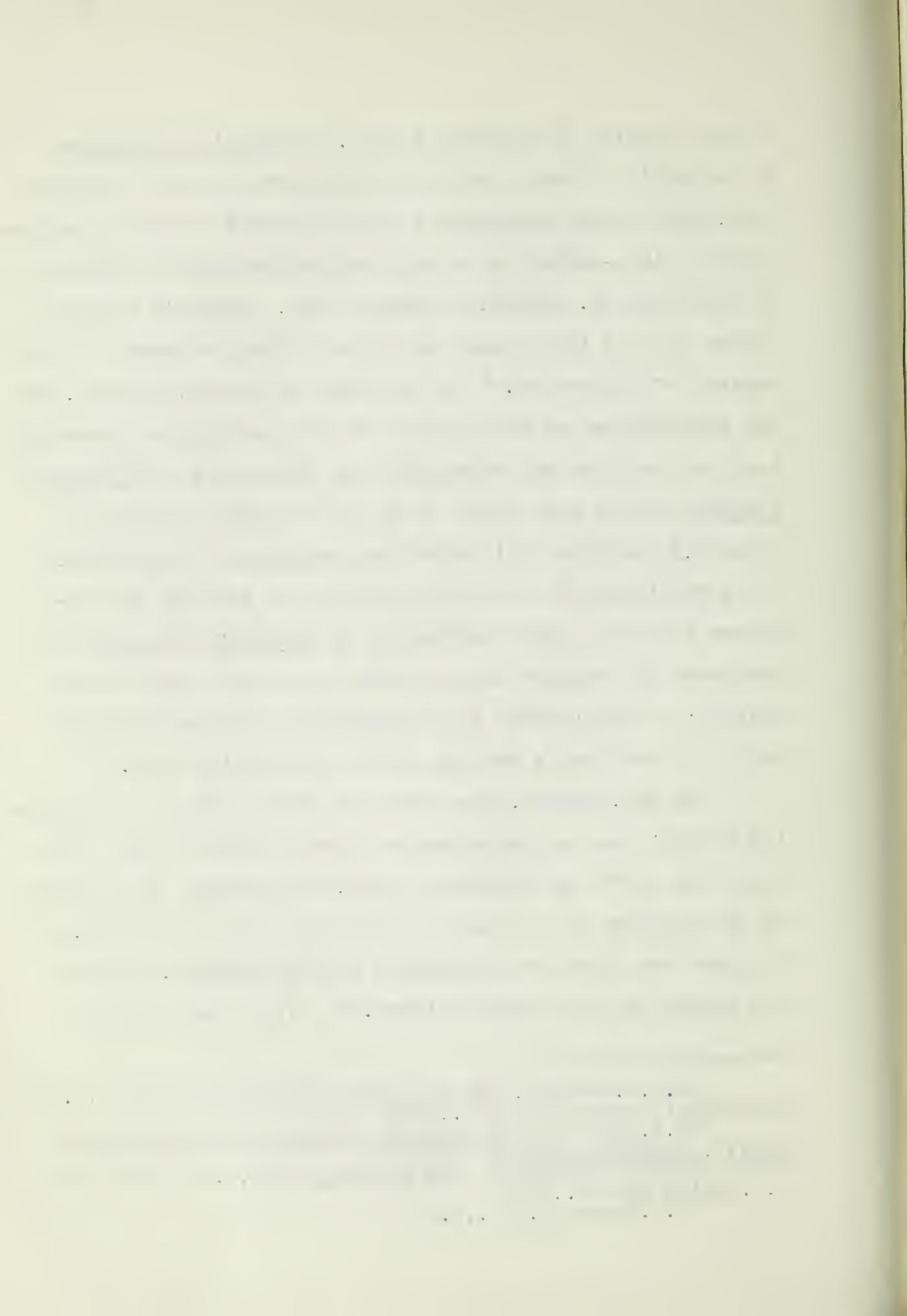
We may, however, agree with all these statements concerning Bunyan's use of Bedfordshire detail, without being willing to go so far as Professor Lowes, who remarks: "The setting of the allegory is as true to life as are the characters, and the more one knows of seventeenth century England, the more one marvels at its verisimilitude."⁴ It is one thing to

¹H.E.B.Speight, Life and Writings of John Bunyan, p.192 (New York: Harper and Bros., 1928)

²T.B.Macaulay, "The Southey Edition of Pilgrim's Progress", Edinburgh Review LIV:452

³George Saintsbury, The English Novel, p.57 (New York: E.P.Dutton and Co., 1924)

⁴J.L.Lowes, op.cit., p.67



admit that Bedfordshire scenes were ever in Bunyan's mind as he wrote Pilgrim's Progress; it is quite another to assert that, because of this infusion of Bedfordshire material, the setting has a great deal of verisimilitude, that it seems true to life. After a careful study of the evidence, I, for one, am forced to conclude that, while occasionally Bunyan does get verisimilitude, his settings are generally so heightened, idealized, or struck through with Biblical detail as to be unacceptable as life-like pictures, though it appears very certain to me that because of the touches of realistic Bedfordshire detail even the most unbelievable of his settings become for the moment more plausible. A strong and sustained feeling of probability is, however, only very infrequently aroused in the mind of the reader.

Indeed, one recent critic of Bunyan, whose work has attracted considerable attention and comment, would go so far as to deny any basis for realism in Bunyan's settings : in an unpublished Harvard dissertation and in several of the magazines of literary scholarship, Harold Golder claims that the basic source of Bunyan's narrative incident and setting is to be found in the conventions of chivalric romance. If Golder's theory is acceptable, there is obviously little need for a study of realism as it is approached in Bunyan's settings, for, the theory accepted, the basis for realism is removed. It

seems desirable, therefore, before proceeding to an analysis of those elements of realism that appear to me to be found in Bunyan's settings , to outline Golder's theory and indicate its weakness. Golder sets out to show that the chivalric elements in Pilgrim's Progress are numerous and minutely detailed, that they were based on Bunyan's detailed recall of the chivalric romances he read in childhood, and that Bunyan was definitely conscious of the process. Now there is little doubt that Bunyan had some first-hand knowledge of seventeenth century versions of such romances. In his childhood, as Griffeth reminds us, he showed romantic leanings:

....it was to his mind to get among playmates as wild as himself....likely, they fought with imaginary giants, escaped out of imaginary dungeons, and, in many ways other than imaginary, trespassed on forbidden grounds, wandered over meadow by-paths, and came to mud and grief in the sloughs and stews of the countryside.¹

Throughout his youth and up to his conversion, he indulged joyfully in romance reading; of this period of his life he remarks, in A Few Sights From Hell : "Alas! What is the Scripture? Give me a ballad, a news-book, George on horseback, or Bevis of Southampton; give me some book that teaches curious acts, that tells of old fables; but for the holy Scriptures I cared not."² But after his conversion, according to his own assertion in Grace Abounding, he put away such "childish and

¹G.O.Griffeth, John Bunyan, p.41 (London:Hodder and Stoughton,1928)

²Works, p.518 (n.p.:Blackie and Son,1854)

"sinful" things; and in other works he frequently denounced romance materials as "worthless things" tending "to set all fleshly lusts on fire."¹ In recent years, to be sure, several scholars have been inclined to regard these denunciations as hypocrisy. They refer to the "Address to the Reader" in The Holy War where Bunyan protests as follows of the originality of Pilgrim's Progress:

It came from mine own heart, so to my head,
And thence into my fingers trickled;....
Manner and matter, too, was all my own;
Nor was it unto any mortal known
Till I had done it;....
Witness my name, if anagram'd to thee
The letters make -'Nu hony in a B.'²

And then they go on to remark much as does Tindall:

The labor of recent scholars has supported the insinuations of the skeptical. The indebtedness of Bunyan to Richard Bernard has been exposed to our admiration, the allegorical pilgrimage has been pursued from the Middle Ages to the sermons and tracts of the seventeenth century, Bunyan's acquaintance with the popular romance has been demonstrated....These useful labors....have shown that, though Bunyan was unfamiliar at first hand with the works of the Middle Ages, he knew and used the little known descendants of these works, the tracts, sermons, and romances of the seventeenth century, which carried their traditional freight to his notice.³

Now this is one of those half truths so misleading to many over-zealous investigators; to prove an author's acquaintance with certain works is one thing, to prove his extended use of them is another; and literary parallels are not proof of

¹See Works, p.594; and The Life and Death of Mr Badman And The Holy War (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1905) pp.43, 183

²Life and Death of Mr Badman and The Holy War, p.7, 8.

³W.Y.Tindall, John Bunyan Mechanick Preacher, p.195-96 (New York:Columbia Univ. Studies in English, 1934)

literary borrowing, and even literary borrowing does not always warrant - particularly in the seventeenth century - the charge of plagiarism and hypocrisy. Naturally, Bunyan read tracts and sermons - tracts and sermons struck through with the idea of life as a pilgrimage and containing, no doubt, many elements and stories similar to those of chivalric romance but founded on biblical sources and theological speculation. Bunyan was a child of his time and of his field; he was not a hypocrite. And the fact that he drew ideas - often subconsciously - from sermons and tracts does not warrant the assumption that he drew in detail and consciously from romances, which he looked back on as part of the sins of his youth. Indeed, to prove the lack of convincing evidence for Golder's assumptions, it is only necessary to cite the extent to which he is forced to depend on hypothesis and postulation. To explain Bunyan's supposedly tolerant attitude toward chivalric romances at the time of his writing of Pilgrim's Progress, Golder says: "He had with growing mellowness of years and the loss of his early sternness toward everything that did not face directly toward heaven, become, I believe, more tolerant toward such literature. His conscience was fully satisfied that he wrote in the manner of romance only for pious ends."¹ This, of course, is pure speculation - and is, moreover, begging

¹ Harold Golder, The Chivalric Background of Pilgrim's Progress, p. 219. (Unpublished Harvard thesis, 1925)

the question, for Bunyan never repudiated the type of non-chivalric romance that he found in the Hebrew folk tales of the Old Testament. As Golder himself notes, Bunyan

....found in the older books of the Bible much that reminded him pleasantly of tales he had known in his earlier years. Many episodes in the Bible are, indeed, much like the typical episodes of chivalric romance....Heroes, giants, and enchanters are common to both books....He seems to have carried over into his first reading of the Bible the memories of older reading and to have enjoyed the one because it reminded of the other.¹

Considering Bunyan's denunciation of chivalric romance as sinful, it would certainly be more fair for Golder to conclude that Bunyan drew from the Bible the inspiration for the romance elements in Pilgrim's Progress, and that it is possible - perhaps probable - that Bunyan subconsciously transferred the general color of some incidents of chivalric romance to the Bible stories and thence to his allegory. We may admit with Golder that Bunyan, in his Exposition of the First Ten Chapters of Genesis, does interpret the Bible in the light of romance: by rejoicing, for example, that, at the time of the flood, none of the giants was able to keep his chin above water, and by describing the raven, after the recession of the waters, banqueting on the carcasses of the giants. But this need not imply the actual detailed carry-over to Pilgrim's Progress of great numbers of the events, symbols, and settings of chivalric romance; for Bunyan could

¹Ibid., p.85

have found such materials in the folk-tale romance of the Bible, in allegorical theological literature, and in the world about Bedfordshire when that world was recreated by Bunyan's active imagination to the point where every tree, every hill, every ditch, every puddle took on a vivid spiritual significance and a symbolic life reflecting Bunyan's own spiritual crises. If we are to agree with Golder that Bunyan borrowed practically the whole plan and much of the detail of Pilgrim's Progress from chivalric romance, we must be convinced solely by his proof that there are certain resemblances between Pilgrim's Progress and chivalric romances, and by his contention that Bunyan was familiar with the sources containing the resemblances. This latter point is solely conjecture; Golder himself remarks:

If we postulate a copy of Johnson's Seven Champions as Bunyan's own property and boyhood companion, read and digested as thoroughly as he later read and digested the Bible, and if we account for Bunyan's knowledge of other romantic material by imagining that he read borrowed copies and perhaps in addition saw plays, heard ballads, and listened to old wives fables, the problem is provided, I believe, with a satisfactory hypothesis.¹

All this requires too much wishful thinking. As W.H.Hutton remarks:

A great deal of ingenuity has been expended on the question whether Bunyan was or was not indebted to many early romances. The result is practically negligible. Did Bunyan read romances? he implies that he did; but in his converted life he would not be likely to allow them to influence him.²

¹Ibid., p.344

²W.H.Hutton, "John Bunyan", Quarterly Review, CCLI:104. (July, 1928)

At least he would not have been so conscious of chivalric romance and so favorable toward it as to explain adequately the borrowing of minute details of setting and structure.

Dr. John Brown well concludes: "Bunyan was steeped in his Bible, and what indebtedness there was was mainly to that.

....The Pilgrim's Progress is an English flower, as the Divine Commedia is a Tuscan flower, grown on Jewish soil."¹ That Bunyan was romantically minded no one need deny; had he not been so he could not have been a great allegorist who colored and recreated the world about him through the power of his symbolic and interpretive imagination, and peopled it with persons and places symbolizing the various phases and stages of man's spiritual life. It is to be remembered, however, that the basis of Bunyan's romantic allegory is Puritan belief. As Speight says:

....central to the Puritan emphasis upon religious experience was this conviction that on the Christian pilgrimage a man must follow a way from which peril is never far removed.²

This idea, acted upon by Bunyan's vivid imagination, is sufficient, together with the elements of romance in the Old Testament, to give us Pilgrim's Progress, even had Bunyan never heard of chivalric romance. That he made any extensive detailed use of such romance seems unwarranted by the evi-

¹John Brown, Bunyan - His Life, Times and Work, II:44-45 (London: Isbister and Co., Ltd., 1902)

²H.E.B. Speight, op.cit., p78.

dence - and entirely foreign to a Puritan who, after his conversion, warned his readers on several occasions that such romance encouraged frivolity and provided a provocation to bestiality.

Analysis of Settings in Pilgrim's Progress

Now that the fallacy of Golder's thesis has been indicated, we may turn to a detailed examination of the evidence massed by scholars to indicate the extent of Bunyan's use of setting detail drawn from life, and to a consideration of how strong a sense of probability that detail adds to the settings and to the narrative.

That certain experiences of Bunyan account for recurring details of setting in Pilgrim's Progress should be evident to any student of his life. First, his youthful bell-ringing activities, though followed by a conversion which made him fearful even to stand near a person ringing a church bell for fear of being struck down by God, nevertheless continued to fascinate him; and at several points in Pilgrim's Progress we find the bells used as symbols of delight, as when Christian and Hopeful, approaching the Celestial City, "thought they heard all the bells therein ring to welcome them." Secondly, the dependence of Bunyan's moods on the weather, as Speight points out,¹ directly influenced certain settings. It will be

¹Ibid., p. 86-87

recalled that even in the early days of Bunyan's conversion, the sun was to him a symbol of cheer; in Grace Abounding he describes the four godly women whom he overheard joyfully discussing their religious experience as sitting in the sun, and his first dream of a wicket-gate through which pilgrims must pass was of these women sitting on the sunny side of a high mountain, refreshing themselves "with the pleasantest beams of the sun" while he was "shivering and shrinking in the cold." His jail experience probably intensified his feeling toward the significance of light and shadow. In Pilgrim's Progress, the Giant Despair has fits in sunny weather, making it then possible to overcome him; the birds in the groves about the House Beautiful "sing only in the Spring when the sun shines warm"; the distress of Christian after his sleep in the arbour of the Hill of Difficulty is aggravated by the fact that the sun went down while he slept; in the Valley of the Shadow, Christian has an easier time in the second part of the valley because the sun rises. Moreover, in Part II of Pilgrim's Progress, Feeble-minded finds the hospitality of Mr. Gaius "an unexpected favor and as the sun shining out of a very dark cloud"; Mr. Fearing, after spending a whole month in the Slough of Despond, at last escapes on a sunshiny morning; and Mercy, dreaming of the Celestial City while sleeping in the Palace Beautiful, remarks that "the place looked bright

and twinkled like the stars, or rather like the Sun." These illustrations of the influence of Bunyan's experiences on his settings prove that he drew details from his own Bedfordshire life; they do not, however, afford proof of any convincing verisimilitude inherent in the scenes of which they are a part. And it is only in so far as they are combined with other details that are seemingly true to life that the probability of any setting (taken as a whole) will be increased.

This being understood, we now come to a consideration of various individual settings, the details of which, scholars have contended, are drawn largely from Bedfordshire. It should perhaps be stated here that there is a tendency on the part of several Bunyan scholars to go to enthusiastic extremes in identifying, specifically, some part of Bedfordshire with each minute detail of Pilgrim's Progress. This discussion will attempt to outline only the predominantly probable backgrounds for Bunyan's settings. And it will do this, not with a view to implying that the existence of a prototype implies that the reader will find a setting probable, but merely because detailed knowledge of the similarity which exists between Pilgrim's Progress' scenes and Bedfordshire landscapes may help us to determine to what extent the settings are life-like if we judge them as units.

In setting forth toward the wicket gate across "a very

wide field", Christian, fleeing from his wife and children, came first to the Slough of Despond - "a very miry Slough" which Christian and Pliable "heedless did both fall suddenly into"; "here therefore they wallowed for a time, being grievously bedaubed with dirt."¹ According to Help, who rescued Christian, this slough represents:

....the descent whither the scum and filth that attends conviction for sin doth continually run....True, there are, by the direction of the Law-giver, certain good and substantial steps, placed even through the very midst of this slough; but at such time as this place doth much spue out its filth, as it does against change of Weather, these steps are hardly seen; or if they be, men through the dizziness of their Heads, step besides.²

John Brown and A.F.Foster content themselves with suggesting that this description of the slough was suggested to Bunyan by a rain-flooded field near his house "into which whosoever wandered stuck fast in miry perplexity"³ or by any of the meadows between Elstow and the Ouse in which Bunyan many times found himself overshoe in a bog.⁴ C.G.Harper makes a more definite and, I think, a quite probable identification, locating the prototype of the slough on Holyhead Road, north of Dunstable on the way to Hockliffe, a road which "received all the surface water draining from the side of the Downs, as well as having the beginnings of the Ouzel."⁵ That this par-

¹Pilgrim's Progress, p,15. (Oxford University Press, 1928) All references are to this edition unless otherwise noted.

²Ibid., p.17

³John Brown,op.cit., p.40

⁴A.F.Foster, Bunyan's Country, p.52 (London, Virtue and Co., 1901)

⁵C.G.Harper, The Bunyan Country, p.72-75. (London, nn, 1928)

ticular road was probably in Bunyan's mind is suggested first by the fact that Bunyan states that the King's Surveyor had endeavored to abolish the slough for 1600 years, about the same time that the Holyhead Road, originally the Watling Street Ancient Roman Road had been in existence.¹ Secondly, Bunyan, in Part II, states that when Christiana went over the slough, its condition was still worse than when her husband had crossed it because many who pretend to be King's labourers "bring Dirt and Dung instead of Stones, and so mar instead of mending."² Harper suggests that this passage "no doubt reflects the experience, not only of Bunyan, but also of travellers in general who went between Hockliffe and Dunstable. Instead of bringing proper materials for road-mending [he adds by way of explanation] there was brought any kind of dirt or refuse that lay handy" - a method which continued down into the nineteenth century.³ Though the description of the Slough is not extensive, its details seem drawn from life, and as they are not mixed with other improbable details, the Slough of Despond scene has in it all the elements of a probable adventure of any Bedfordshire resident.

The next important landmark in Pilgrim's Progress is Mt. Sinai, on the way to the Village of Morality:

¹ Idem.

² Pilgrim's Progress, p.198

³ C.G. Harper, op.cit., p.151

....it seemed so high, and also, that side of it that was next the way side, did hang so much over, that Christian was afraid to venture further, lest the Hill should fall on his head....There came also flashes of fire out of the Hill, that made Christian afraid that he should be burned: here therefore he did sweat and did quake for fear.¹

Both Foster and Harper agree in identifying this hill with Risinghoe at Castle Mills, - exceedingly steep, and "so covered with dense underbrush as to be unclimable except by the most determined." Risinghoe was probably thrown up by Saxon defenders in 921 A.D., and quite probably was used "as a signalling station in remote times when fire signals were used."² If this was known to Bunyan, he may have associated the signals with the flashes of fire of Exodus XIX:18. Despite these facts, however, no real verisimilitude can be claimed for this scene: the reader is not convinced of the probability of the fire-spitting hill - and details indicative of a volcanic structure for the terraine, which might have given credence to the account, are absent.

In Part II of Pilgrim's Progress, after Christiana had passed the wicket gate, she skirted the Devil's Garden:

Now there was, on the other side of the Wall that fenced in the way up which Christiana and her Companions was to go, a Garden; and that Garden belonged to him whose was that Barking Dog.... And some of the Fruit-Trees that grew in that Garden shot their Branches over the Wall, and being mellow, they that found them did gather them up and oft eat of them to their hurt.³

¹Pilgrim's Progress, p.205

²C.G. Harper, op.cit., p.77; A.J. Foster, op.cit., p.53ff

³Pilgrim's Progress, p.205

That this description was prompted by Bedfordshire gardens seems likely, and that Bunyan may have read his own childhood experience into the incident appears probable when we recall that Matthew later fell sick from the fruit. This setting has a strong element of probability, the descriptive touches being true-seeming.

Next the pilgrims arrived at the House of the Interpreter. Here were many symbolic rooms and objects: the picture of Christ "in a private room"¹; "the very large Parlor, that was full of dust (original sin) because never swept"²; the fire burning against a wall, with one man casting water on it and another oil (fire of grace, Satan, and Christ)³; the "very dark room where sat a man in an Iron Cage"⁴ (Despair); the slaughter house⁵; and so forth. How far any of these may have been suggested to Bunyan by Bedfordshire is simple conjecture; most of them seem likely to be direct products of Bunyan's imagination, or possibly borrowings from biblical literature (such as the description of the vision of judgment⁶) or from theological literature (such as the symbol of the room of the man with the muck-rake, the whole detail of which was borrowed from Arthur Dent's Plaine Man's Pathway To Heaven⁷). Yet even here in the Interpreter's House, Bed-

¹Ibid. p.31

²Ibid., p.32

³Ibid., p.34-35

⁴Ibid., p.36

⁵Ibid., p.213

⁶Ibid., p.38-39

⁷Ibid., p.211 and Dent III:45 (1625 edition)

fordshire may have played its part. Within the grounds of this house

there was builded a stately Palace, beautiful to beholdupon the top thereof, certain persons walked who were cloathed in gold....Then the Interpreter took him and led him up toward the door of the Palace; and behold at the door stood a great company of men, as desirous to go in but durst not. There also sat a Man at a little distance from the door, at a Table-side, with a Book, and his Inkhorn before him...; in the doorway stood many men in armour to keep it.¹

Harper suggests that this is "a composite picture of two beautiful country houses that Bunyan well knew : Elstow Placeand the even more ornate mansion at Houghton Conquest"²; and Foster reminds us that Elstow Place had "a porch flanked by pilasters and surmounted by a pediment and armorial coats - a fitting atmosphere to suggest the well-armed opposing guards faced by a Christian soldier."³ Whether one is impressed by this suggestion or not, he must grant that "the garden with its great variety of flowers"⁴ was probably prompted by Bedfordshire gardens. And one should consider carefully the possibility that Bunyan's observations in Bedfordshire may have provided the basis for "the very best room in the house" where "there was nothing to be seen but a very great spider on the wall"⁵ (symbol that sin, if audacious enough, may be present even in God's house); for the use of chickens as a symbol of thanksgiving : in another room "one of the Chickens

¹Pilgrim's Progress, p.35

²C.G.Harper, op.cit. p.78ff

³A.J.Foster, op.cit., p.64

⁴Pilgrim's Progress, p.214

⁵Ibid., p.212

went to the Trough to drink, and every time she drank she lifted up her head and her eyes toward Heaven"¹; for the use of the robin as a symbol of warning that pretty things do not always act prettily: "as they were coming in from abroad, they espied a little Robbin with a great Spider in his mouth"²; and for the use of the tree "whose inside was rotten and gone, and yet it grew and had leaves"³ as a symbol of warning against putting ones trust in outward appearance. It is also worth noting, as Heath points out, that some of the details of the Interpreter's House - and later, of the Palace Beautiful - may have been prompted by reminiscences of the details of Anabaptist Community Houses :

All that has been related concerning the welcome and the entertainment pilgrims received in the House Beautiful might very well have happened to Anabaptist emigrants to Moravia. For in that land and wherever Anabaptists found protectors, houses arose answering very exactly to Bunyan's description of the Interpreter's House and the House Beautiful, neither of which is a mere family residence, but a form of household unknown in England in Bunyan's time, and even yet unknown - Community-houses, where none of the inmates possessed the smallest thing of their own, but where all worked for the common benefit and shared in the general well-being. With their stately receiving rooms, innumerable bed-rooms, many out-houses and workshops, surrounded by gardens, farms, fields, orchards, and vineyards, they had a palatial air.⁴

Nevertheless, despite the fact that many of the details of the House of the Interpreter may have been drawn from life, the composite picture, made up as it is of so many divergent cur-

¹Ibid., p.213

²Ibid., p.214

³Ibid., p.216

⁴Richard Heath, "The Archetype of Pilgrim's Progress", Contemporary Review LXX:551 (1896)

osities, with so many labored allegorical allusions accompanying them, does not encourage belief in its trueness to life; the most the realistic details do is to make a quite improbable setting at times slightly more plausible.

The next important stopping place of Christian was the Palace Beautiful "by the High Way Side", approached by "a narrow passage....about a furlong off of the Porter's Lodge" by which were chained two lions.¹ Here Christian dined, slept in the Chamber of Peace - "a large upper Chamber, whose Window opened toward the Sun rising"² - and viewed the collection of Christian records in the study, and the collection of Christian arms (Moses' rod, David's sling, etc.) in the armory.³ When Christiana came, she viewed here the apples of Eve; Jacob's ladder with the angels ascending and descending upon it; and the altar, wood, fire, and knife of Abraham's sacrifice.⁴ Both Foster and Harper state definitely that the Palace Beautiful was suggested to Bunyan by Lord Ailesbury's Houghton House; Brown⁵ and Harrison⁶ agree; and Speight admits the possibility. Foster, in support of his contention, advances a large chamber with a magnificent view on the eastern side of Houghton House, the records of antiquity in the Lord's library, the collection of armour in the hall of Houghton

¹Pilgrim's Progress, p.48

²Ibid., p.56

³Idem

⁴Ibid., p.246ff

⁵John Brown, op.cit., p.20-21

⁶Frank M. Harrison, Tercentenary Edition of John Brown's Bunyan, p.18 (London: Hulbert Publishing Co., 1928)

House, - and remarks that the inclusion of relics in Bunyan's description may have been suggested by the Lord's antiquarian interests.¹ Harper adds that the lions by the Porter's Lodge in Pilgrim's Progress may have been suggested by the fierce dogs which the boy Bunyan had often met as he approached the house with his father,² and which he later no doubt identified in his imagination with biblical lions.³ The Palace Beautiful, however, is not true-seeming despite the undoubted actuality of many of its details; there are too many wonders here for the setting to gain credence through the introduction of scattered bits of reality.

The association of the Palace Beautiful with Houghton House seems further supported when we recall that on the morning of his departure Christian viewed Immanuel's Land from the top of Palace Beautiful :

....at a great distance, he saw a most pleasant Mountainous Country, beautified with Woods, Vineyards, Fruit of all sorts; Flowers also, with Springs and Fountains, very delectable to behold.⁴

Foster tells us that, when looking south from Houghton House, we have the

gardens and orchards of Ampthill, and beyond these the woods of Flitton and Silsoe, and still further, and blocking off all view beyond, the line of the far stretching Chiltern Hills. When the sun is due south, if we take our stand above Ampthill at mid-day, we see these great lazy

¹A.F. Foster, op.cit., p.91-93

²C.G. Harper, op.cit., p.92

³Probably those of 2 Chron. 9:18

⁴Pilgrim's Progress, p.59

chalk giants sleeping, as it were, in the haze of the sunshine, all their whiteness turned to purple.¹

With this view to recall and biblical details of Immanuel's Land to draw on, Bunyan would hardly have found it necessary, as Golder contends, to find his inspiration in "the pleasant fields and flourishing meadows so beautiful with nature's gladsome ornaments" of The Seven Champions of Christendom.² When Christiana leaves the Palace Beautiful, we get another echo of Bunyan's England, for she hears melodious singing in the grove a little way off, and Prudence remarks:

They are....our Countrey Birds. They sing these Notes but seldom, except it be at the Spring, when the Flowers appear, and the Sun shines warm, and then you may hear them all day long....We also oft times keep them tame in our House.³

These touches concerning the surroundings of the Palace Beautiful promote in the scene itself a preponderance of probability, provided, of course, that the reader considers the scene as a unit in itself, and dismisses his disbelief in the Palace Beautiful proper.

The next important port of call in Pilgrim's Progress is the Valley of Humiliation, where Christian meets Apollyon. A significant point to note concerning it is that Bunyan takes advantage here, as he does in several other places, of the fact that a person's idea of a place is definitely in-

¹A.F. Foster, op.cit., p. 96-98. See also picture in Crockett's John Bunyan's England (London: Homeland Association, Ltd., 1928)

²Harold Golder, op.cit., p. 128

³Pilgrim's Progress, p. 248

fluenced by his mood and by the time of day and year. Unlike Christian, Christiana finds it a pleasant place despite the monument to Christian's awful experience "in the narrow passage just beyond Forgetful Green" and the approach "down a steep, slippery hill."¹ In explanation of this difference Brave Heart says:

It is the best and most fruitful piece of Ground in all those parts. It is fat Ground, and as you see, consisteth much in Meddows: and if a man was to come here in the Summer time, as we do now, if he knew not anything thereof before, and if he also delighted himself in the sight of his Eyes, he might see that that would be delightful to him. Behold, how green this Valley is, also how beautiful with Lillies.... In this Valley our Lord formerly had his Countrey-House.²

So Bunyan points out strikingly that mood and circumstance partly create our concepts of both material and spiritual experience. The setting, taken in itself, lends a definite, if momentary, sense of probability to the story.

Bunyan's description of the Valley of the Shadow of Death is as follows: "Now this Valley is a very solitary place. The Prophet Jeremiah thus describes it A Wilderness, a Land of Desarts, and of Pits, a Land of Drought, and of the shadow of death."³ And to Christian, when he is just coming to the Valley, Bunyan has the children of spies, who are returning, report:

Seen! Why the Valley it self, which is as dark as pitch; we also saw there the Hobgoblins, Satyrs and Dragons of

¹Ibid., pp. 63, 248

²Ibid., p. 250

³Ibid., p. 65

the Pit: we heard also in that Valley continual howling and yelling....and over that Valley hangs the discouraging Clouds of confusion, death also doth always spread his wings over it.¹

Faithful, however, had sunshine on his trip through the Valley.²

But for Christian it was a way of terror:

....so far as this Valley reached there was on the right hand a very deep Ditch; that Ditch is it into which the blind have led the blind in all Ages....Again, behold on the left hand, there was a very dangerous Quagg, into which even if a good man falls, he finds no bottom for his foot to stand on....The path-way was also here exceedingly narrow....when he sought, in the dark, to shun the ditch on the one hand, he was ready to tip over into the mire on the other;....the pathway here was also dark, that oft-times when he lift up his foot to set forward, he knew not where, nor upon what, he should set it next.³

In the midst of this Valley, Christian saw the Mouth of Hell:

And ever and anon the flame and smoke would come out in such abundance, with sparks and hideous noises.... the flames would be reaching toward him....also he heard doleful noises and rushings to and fro, so that sometimes he thought he should be torn to pieces, or trodden down like mire in the Sheets....for several miles together.⁴

And beyond the Mouth of Hell even to the end of the Valley, "the way was all along set so full of Snares, Traps, Gins, and Nets here, and so full of Pits, Pitfalls, deep holes and shelvings down there" that had it been dark he would have perished.⁵ "At the end of this Valley lay blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of men, even of Pilgrims, that had gone this way formerly."⁶ Unlike Christian, Christiana had daylight up to

¹Ibid., p.66

²Ibid., p.80

³Ibid., p.67

⁴Idem.

⁵Ibid., p.69

⁶Ibid., p.70

the middle of the Valley; but she and her party found the place "strangely haunted by evil things": groaning, shaking ground, hissing serpents, and roaring lions; finally, however, they came at a place where was cast up a pit, the whole breadth of the way....a great mist and darkness fell over them....great stinks and loathsome smells beset them.¹

But they called to God for light, and the pit disappeared. Its name suggested by the Twenty-third Psalm, the Valley of the Shadow is described to a great extent through details and phrases borrowed from Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Job. Satyrs, dragons, terrors, confusions, and darkness with sudden light are part of the stock in trade of the psalmists and the prophets. The flaming pit has its counterpart in John's vision in the Apocalypse, and the 'sword-bridge' (as Golder insists on calling Bunyan's narrow pathway between chasms) may have been partly suggested by the mire into which David prayed his sins might not plunge him, or by the ditch into which Job lamented that a righteous man should have fallen. Yet Golder concludes:

Bunyan's Valley of the Shadow is a dark valley of romance. Its darkness is the preternatural gloom of dismal regionsin the Seven Champions, Arthur of Little Britain, Palmerin of England, Palladine of England, Don Belianis, and the Mirrour of Knighthood. Like these valleys Bunyan's valley is infested with hobgoblins and satyrs, invisible foes, and beset with unseen dangers. From the pit in the midst of the valley issue sparks and flames that do nothing to dispel the obscurity. And Christian....followed the footsteps of chivalric heroes and reenacted in

¹Ibid., p. 253-56

his dangerous progress a series of conventional situations through which many or all of his predecessors had passed.¹

So because much of the narrative framework of Pilgrim's Progress can be paralleled (by a considerable stretch of the imagination!) in chivalric romances, Golder insists that Bunyan borrowed from those romances not only the framework but also "a good part" of the descriptive detail², though he fails to indicate what descriptive detail Bunyan had not more easily available elsewhere. And Golder entirely ignores the fact that, to a man of Bunyan's imagination, Millbrook Gorge, with its deep gloomy sides and a bottom damp and marshy enough to suggest a quagg³, may have been linked inseparably with the biblical Valley of the Shadow. As Harper reminds us, Millbrook Vale is heavy, in winter only, with the mists and damps of the Ouse, and "the blacksmith's forge and the ringing anvil down in the ravine were models for that place whence came flames and smoke, sparks and hideous noises."⁴ Nevertheless, though the quagg and the pathway of the Valley of the Shadow may be and seem true to life, the sum-total picture, though it may have seemed to Bunyan to be a Millbrook Gorge, does not seem to the reader to be anything life-like in material existence. It may appear extremely realistic, however,

¹ Harold Golder, "Bunyan's Valley of the Shadow", Modern Philology XXVII:59 (August 1929)

² Ibid., p.66

³ A.F. Foster, op.cit., p.104-06

⁴ C.G. Harper, op.cit., p.101-02

if he considers it as an expressionist picture of one's emotional state when he is near death. If this setting has reality, then, it has it only in the sense that Bunyan has almost perfectly described a common emotional and spiritual experience in terms of Calvinistic anthropomorphic ideology. Bunyan makes a spiritual adventure true-seeming here by expressing it through details which are the stock material symbols of a common attitude toward death.

There seems no doubt that Vanity Fair, located on the edge of the Wilderness and on the way to the Celestial City, was suggested to Bunyan, in large part, by Stourbridge Fair.

In Pilgrim's Progress Bunyan describes the Fair as follows:

As in other Fairs of less moment, there are several rows and streets under their proper names, where such and such Wares are vended: so here likewise, you have the proper places, Rows, Streets (viz. Countreys, and Kingdoms) where the Wares of this Fair are soonest to be found: Here is the Britain Row, the French Row, the Italian Row, the Spanish Row, the German Row, where several sorts of Vanities are to be sold. But as in other Fairs, some one Commodity is as the chief of all the Fair, so the Ware of Rome and her Merchandise is greatly promoted in this Fair: Only our English Nation, with some others, have taken a dislike thereto.¹

He speaks also of juggling plays, murders, and other amusements that occur there; tells of the caging of Faithful and Christian (a common sight at English fairs); and adds a biblical touch by having Faithful, after being burned at the stake, borne up by chariots and horses "through the clouds, with sound of

¹Pilgrim's Progress, p. 94ff

Trumpet, the nearest way to the Coelestial Gate." To be convinced that Stourbridge Fair suggested many of the details of Vanity Fair, it is only necessary to read the following description of Stourbridge Fair:

It was of large extent, covering an area of half a square mile, and had its long line of booths named in rows after the forms of traffic there carried on.... It was a vast emporium of commerce. Mercers from France brought their silks, and Flemings from the Low Countries their woollens; traders from Scotland and from Kendal set forth their pack-horses on the road to be in time for the fair, while barges from London came around by Lynn and brought the merchandise of the city along the Ouse and the Carn. All new discoveries and foreign acquisitions were here first brought to public view; the voyages of Drake and Cavendish and Raleigh furnished their novelties, while products from beyond the East and West of the Atlantic found their way year by year to Sturbridge Fair. When business was over it was succeeded by pleasure. Round the square, in the centre of which rose the great maypole with its vane at the top, there were coffee houses, taverns, music halls, buildings for the exhibition of drolls, legerdemain, mountebanks, wild beasts, dwarfs, giants, rope-dancers, and the like.¹

Were it not followed by the unbelievable detail of Faithful's death, the picture of Vanity Fair might, I believe, be considered highly life-like; and there is no doubt in my mind that the description of the Fair does much, by its realism, to maintain the reader's interest when otherwise he might be becoming tired of wonders.

It seems more than merely possible that Lucre Hill was suggested to Bunyan by Gold Close, Pulloxhill. Bunyan describes Lucre Hill as follows:

¹Nichol, Bib. Topographia V:73ff (as quoted by John Brown in his John Bunyan, p.255 of Tercentenary Edition)

They came at a delicate Plain, called Ease, where they went with much content; but that Plain was but narrow, so they were quickly got over it. Now at the further side of that Plain, there was a little Hill called Lucre, and in that Hill a Silver Mine, which some of them that had formerly gone that way, because of the rarity of it, had turned aside to see; but going too near the brink of the pit, the ground being deceitful under them, broke, and they were slain.¹

Harper points out that in Bunyan's time there was a story current that in the sixteenth century folks dug in Gold Close, sunk shafts there, and lost much money when they found only shining yellow tak, mixed with yellow earthy matter.² And Foster calls attention to the fact that Bunyan describes the mine as situated on a hill rising from a level plain - "an exact description of the situation of Pulloxhill."³ The description of Lucre Hill carries a high degree of probability, and that probability is not checked, as elsewhere, by the introduction of improbable details or incidents.

That Doubting Castle had its partial origin in Bedfordshire is likewise possible, though the evidence is not particularly strong. Doubting Castle was located in a yard littered with dead men's bones, and possessed "a very dark Dungeon, nasty and stinking", from which the only escape was through the inner door, the outer door, and the iron gate.⁴ Admitting that Bunyan had before him the escape of Peter "through the

¹Pilgrim's Progress, p.113

²C.G.Harper,op.cit., p.118

³A.F.Foster,op.cit., p.115

⁴Pilgrim's Progress, pp.120,124,126,297.

first and the second ward", and then out "through the iron gate that leadeth into the City", both Foster and Harper feel that Bunyan's imagination may have been strengthened by his recollection of Cainhoe Castle. Harper remarks:

An entirely chance grouping of this great mound of Cainhoe with one of the old disused piers of an entrance gateway to Wrest Park gives any view of it a grim suggestion of Giant Despair's stronghold; its sculptured griffin seeming to bid defiance to all who would assay to scale that mound.¹

Foster gives a description of its mound-top shell-keep with walls eight to ten feet thick, surrounded by a ditch crossed by a wooden drawbridge, and flanked by two yards or enclosures called the outer bailey and the inner bailey.² There is, however, no reason for claiming that Bunyan's description of Doubting Castle adds any great degree of probability to the narrative.

The description of the Delectable Mountains is thought by both Foster and Harper to be inspired in part by the Chiltern Hills. According to Bunyan, when the pilgrims approached these mountains, they wandered along a river on whose banks grew a variety of fine trees, bearing wholesome fruit; by this river side, in meadows green all the year long and bedecked with dainty flowers, belled sheep wandered; here also was located a house provided for the bringing up of the children of those who went on pilgrimage. Further along, in the moun-

¹C.G.Harper,op.cit.,p.123

²A.F.Foster,op.cit.,p.127-28

tains themselves, the pilgrims found "gardens and orchards, vineyards and fountains of water." They were shown the "very steep" Hill of Error, with bones of men at its foot; Mount Caution, where the men whose eyes were put out by Giant Despair walked among the tombs; the By-Way to Hell, which they looked into from a door-way on the side of a hill, - a doorway dark and smoky, from which came a rumbling noise as of fire, the cry of some tormented, and the scent of brimstone. In addition, the pilgrims in Christiana's company saw Mt. Marvel, Mt. Innocent, and Mt. Charity, symbolic places not described in detail.¹ Foster points out that although Bunyan has embellished the Chiltern Hills (the gardens and orchards having actually been left behind on the plain), those hills abound in streams of water "that burst from the side of the hills with strength and abundance", and in belled sheep roaming at will over unfenced downs - a sight not common elsewhere.² Moreover, the resemblance of the Chilterns to the Delectable Mountains does not stop here: Chiltern chalk pits may well have helped to suggest the Hill of Error; the tumuli on the Dunstable downs, Mt. Caution; the Tottenhoe blasting quarry and the limeburners' activities, the Mouth of Hell; and any of the eight-hundred foot hill-tops, Mt. Clear, from

¹Pilgrim's Progress, pp.127-29, 294-300.

²A.F. Foster, op.cit., p.136-38

which Christian viewed the Celestial City.¹ It can easily be seen how Bunyan, fusing in his imagination some of the details of the Chiltern Hills and biblical descriptions which they suggested, may have created the Delectable Mountains, though Heath's suggestion that Anabaptist tradition is responsible for the house where children were to be left to be educated and possibly for some details of the beauty of the mountains cannot be ignored.² The composite picture, however, despite the large number of details drawn from life, is not true-seeming; the real detail merely helps to sustain plausibility.

After his description of the Delectable Mountains, Bunyan tells us that he awoke and then dreamed again. Harper conjectures that this symbolizes his release from jail - and adds that from this point on there is less clarity in the topography because Bunyan's imagination was not so vivid after he could again see every day the scenes of Bedfordshire. Whether the explanation is valid or not, the topography is less distinctive. This, however, may be solely because Bunyan now had only to describe the Enchanted Ground, Beulah Land, and the Celestial City - places which would naturally call for more idealization and more generalized biblical detail.

In Part I of Pilgrim's Progress the Inchanted Ground is described only as a "certain Countrey, whose air, naturally,

¹ Ibid., p.146-49 and C.G.Harper, op.cit., p.127-28

² Richard Heath, op.cit., p.552

tended to make one drowsy, if he came a stranger into it."¹

In Part II, however, this description is greatly expanded:

And that place was all grown over with Bryers and Thorns; excepting here and there, where was an Incharted Arbor, upon which, if a Man sits, or in which a Man sleeps, 'tis a question, say some, whether ever they shall rise or wake again in this World.... Now they had not gone far (over this forest), but a great Mist and a darkness fell upon them all; so that they could scarce, for a great while, see the one the other.... The way here was also very weary-some, thorow Dirt and Shabbiness. Nor was there on all this Ground so much as one Inn, or Victualling House, therein to refresh the feebler sort. Here therefore was grunting, and puffing and sighing: While one tumbleth over a Bush, another sticks fast in the Dirt, and the Children, some of them, lost their shoos in the Mire. While one cries out, I am down, and another, Ho, where are you? and a third, The Bushes have got such fast hold on me, I think I cannot get away from them.... Then they came at an Arbor, warm, and promising much refreshing to the Pilgrims; for it was finely wrought above-head, beautified with Greens, furnished with Benches, and Settles. It also had in it a soft Couch, whereon the weary might lean.

After they had passed this Arbor Slothful, their guide struck a light from a tinder box, and consulted his map; otherwise, they would have been "smothered in the Mud, for just a little before them, and that at the end of the cleanest way too, was a Pit, none knows how deep, full of nothing but Mud." Escaping this, they passed Heedless and Too-bold asleep in another Arbor Slothful. Then, "though the darkness was still very great", a wind arose (as a result of their plea to God for light) "that drove away the fog, so the air became more clear."² Harper correctly says that we cannot hope to place the In-

¹Pilgrim's Progress, p.145

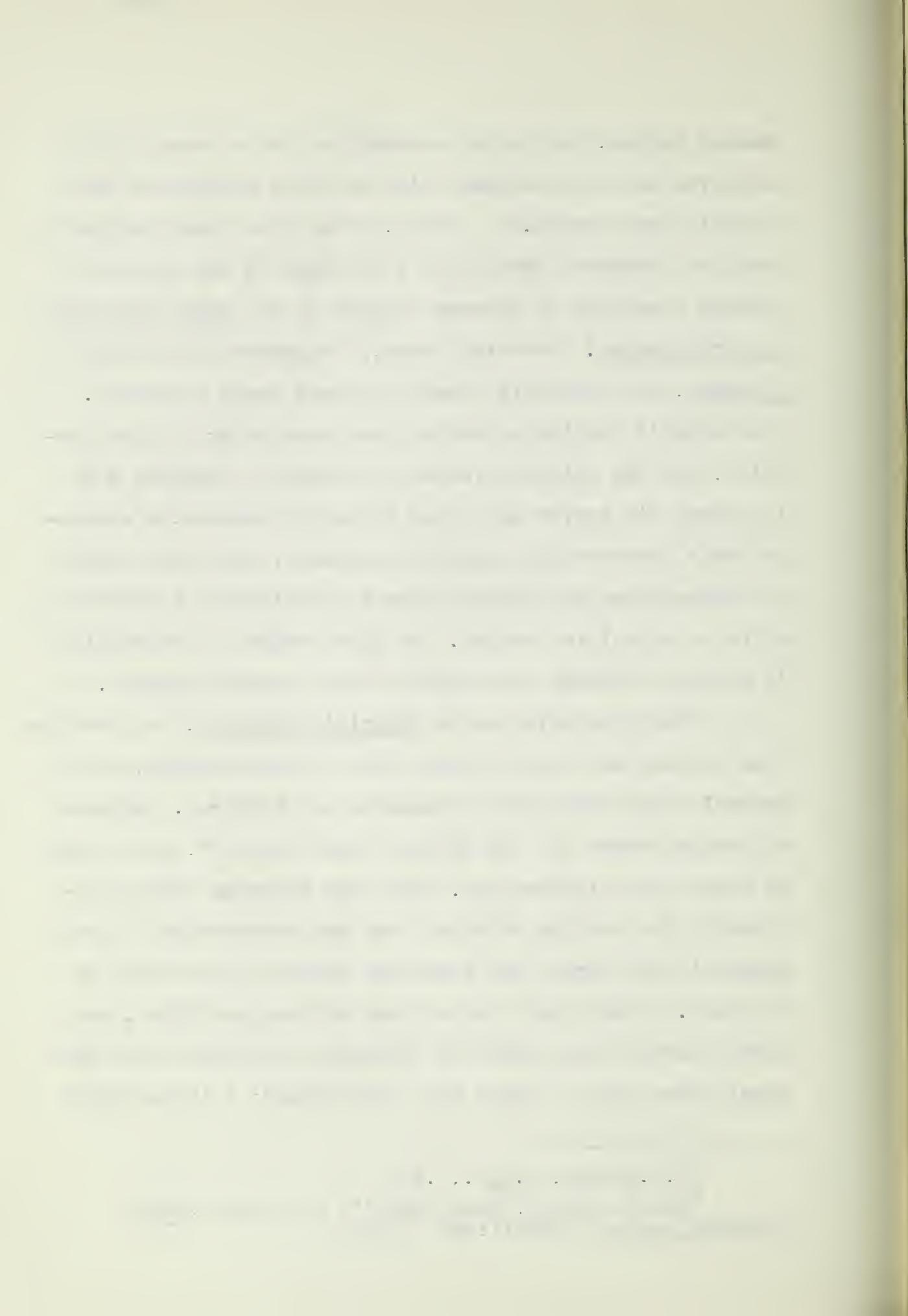
²Ibid., p.310-13

chanted Garden,"but we may commend the whole range of the Chilterns on their northern side as fitly comparable with Bunyan's description."¹ Golder, on the other hand, contends that the Enchanted Garden had its origin in two enchanted gardens described by Richard Johnson in his Seven Champions of Christendom.² Certainly here, if anywhere in Pilgrim's Progress, the chivalric romance element seems suggested. But Golder's parallels are far from convincing in their details, and the critical reader is forced to conclude that if Bunyan did borrow here from chivalric romance, he subconsciously borrowed the general atmosphere, and fused details of Bedfordshire and phrases from the Bible with boyhood memories of chivalric stories. No great degree of probability is attained through the mixing of such varied material.

From this point on in Pilgrim's Progress, the description becomes more shot through with biblical detail, as is natural since the places themselves are biblical. The Land of Beulah, "where the sun shineth night and day", was a land of "sweet and pleasant air." Here the pilgrims "heard continually the singing of birds, and saw everyday the flowers appear in the Earth: and heard the voice of the Turtle in the Land." Here they "had no want of Corn and Wine", and passed through and rested in "Orchards, Vineyards, and Gardens" whose gates "opened into the Highway; a little while

¹C.G.Harper,op.cit.,p.133

²Harold Golder,"John Bunyan's Hypocrisy",North American Review CCXXIII:326 (1926)



soon refreshed them here, for the Bells did so ring, and the Trumpets continuously sound so melodiously, that they could not sleep, and yet they received as much refreshing." In Beulah Land, moreover, they walked in the King's gardens, where the children gathered nosegays; "here also grew Camphire, with Spicknard, and Saffron, Calamus, and Cinamon, with all its Trees of Frankinsens, Myrrh, and Aloes, with all chief Spices."¹ Most of this detail is obviously biblical, yet, as Foster reminds us, around the outskirts of Bedfordshire villages, each cottage has its garden with fruit trees; and in some villages the roadside wastes form playing places for cottagers' children; and in back of Bedfordshire town houses, there are small, well-tilled gardens, with trees, and with gates opening out into the streets.² So once again it seems that the Bible and Bedfordshire were fused inseparably in Bunyan's imagination. And the realistic details help to make plausible others that by themselves would create a feeling of impossibility.

Between Beulah Land and the Celestial City stretched the River of Death "which tasted a little bitterish to the Palate but proved sweeter when down." There was no bridge to go over, and the river was very deep, "though deeper or shallower as you believe in the King of the place." Pilgrims, after crossing, were met with horses and chariots, trumpeters,

¹Pilgrim's Progress, pp. 164-65, 318-19.

²A.F. Foster, op.cit., pp. 157-58, 161.

singers, and players on stringed instruments; and to the accompaniment of bell-ringing, went up through the "regions of the Air" to a "city higher than the clouds", whose gates had inscribed in gold over them the words of Revelations 22:14. The city itself was "builded of Pearls and Precious Stones, also the Street thereof was paved with Gold", reflecting the beams of the sun.¹ So, with a description composed almost entirely of biblical detail, Pilgrim's Progress ends.

Conclusion

Of Bunyan's achievement in Pilgrim's Progress² it may be truly said that he made an almost continual use of realistic detail drawn from the Bedfordshire countryside in such a way as to add a certain plausibility to considerable setting detail which in itself would seem unreal, and to a narrative which, in many places, would otherwise cause the reader to exert great effort to maintain a willing suspension of disbelief. Thus Bunyan demonstrated how realistic detail

¹Pilgrim's Progress, pp.165-72, 321-26

² Students of Bunyan's other important allegory, The Holy War, have shown that while Revelations provides most of the material, Bunyan's own military experience and Anabaptist Fifth Monarchy Tradition (especially that concerning the siege of Munster) color the descriptive detail. Since, however, the elements of realism in the settings are exceedingly minor as compared with those of Pilgrim's Progress, nothing is to gained by analyzing here the setting of the Holy War. Interested readers should consult :Richard Heath, "Archetype of the Holy War", Contemporary Review, LXXII; J.B.Tindall, Bunyan the Mechanick Preacher, p.145ff; H.E.B.Speight, Life and Writings of John Bunyan, p.139-40; Walter Scott, "John Bunyan" in Quarterly Review, October 1830; and John Brown, John Bunyan, p.49 and 311ff (Tercentenary Edition).

may be utilized in allegory to sustain reader interest and to constantly call reader attention to the fact that the allegorist is really interpreting life, and is not as far afield from the interests of the common man as it might otherwise seem. Furthermore, he proved that reality can be given to symbolic place names such as The Slough of Despond, The Devil's Garden, The Valley of Humiliation, Lucre Hill, and Vanity Fair by attaching to those names symbolic of human experience a picture made up of concrete detail drawn almost entirely from actual places; and that thus those symbolic names may have attached to them a constant common referent which will make them aids in communication. Bunyan produces no long sustained verisimilitude; but he does create fragments of it by which to keep his allegory from ever severing its extremely important - but sometimes none too obvious - connection with life. Furthermore, he makes such common things as the Valley of the Shadow of Death seem real, not by drawing from actual material life an inadequate counterpart, but by using the method of the modern expressionist and allowing the symbols that flit through a mind confronted by death to form a concrete picture representing that experience.

VI

APHRA BEHN

One year before Pilgrim's Progress, Part II, was published, Mrs Aphra Behn produced the first of her novels. Before attempting a detailed analysis of her technique in setting, it seems essential to remind the reader that, of her thirteen novels, eight have their locales in places in which she had almost surely lived or traveled, and only five are set in places unknown to her. It will, I believe, help to clarify the evidence soon to be presented if the chronology, given below in chart form, is carefully noted.

	Setting Unknown To Behn	Setting Known To Behn	London	Rural England	Foreign
'83					
	Adventure Of Black Lady				
	Court Of				
	King Bantam				
'85					
	Unfortunate Happy Lady				
'86-'88					
Dumb Virgin	Unfortunate Bride(in part)	Unfortunate Bride (part)			
		Wandering Beauty			
	Unhappy Mistake(part).	Unhappy Mistake(part).			
'88					
Agnes de Castro					Fair Jilt
					Oroonoko
'89					
Lucky Mistake					
Nun or Per- jured Beauty					
Nun or Fair Vowbreaker					

French-Italian Romance Novels

Considering first the five novels with settings which Mrs Behn could not have drawn from personal experience, it is apparent that they are all of the French-Italian romance type. These are discussed here in some detail only to show that there is a definite line of cleavage between two parts of her work, one part of it being wholly romantic, the other definitely aiming at realism though often colored by romanticism. As Summers¹ and others have pointed out, the five novels just referred to are filled with conventional heroic romance characters and the conventional plot devices of that romance; love intrigues, murders, rope-ladder escapes, and the mysterious return of those thought dead follow one another in rapid succession. In all of these Behn had steeped herself through voluminous reading of romances like Pharamond, Cleopâtre, Cassandre, and Le Grand Cyrus. It is not surprising, then, that, in the setting for these novels she is content to mention the conventional locales: Venice and an unknown island twenty leagues hence; Coimbra, Portugal; Orleans; Madrid and Seville; and Iper. She does not, of course, describe their environs except in such vague generalities as those which follow:

¹ Montague Summers, Collected Works of Aphra Behn, preface to volume one. (London: Heinemann, 1915)

There stands an island in the Adriatick Sea, about some twenty leagues from Venice, where art and nature seem to outrival each other, or seem rather to render it the most pleasant of their products; being placed under the most benign climate in the world, and situated exactly between Italy and Greece, it appears an entire epitome of all the pleasures in them both.¹

The River Loire has on its delightful banks abundance of handsome, beautiful and rich towns and villages, to which the noble stream adds no small graces and advantage, blessing their fields with plenty, and their eyes with a thousand diversions.²

And she floods the stories with the conventional stage settings for the plot devices previously mentioned: girl's bed-rooms; innumerable windows, often with balconies extending beyond bed-chambers, and located opposite a window of another house or over a garden; gardens, generally with an arbor or grotto; churches with candles burning at altars (as places for lovers' meetings); nunneries; palaces; and prisons. These are utilized in good pot-boiling stories : Mrs Behn had not been a playwright for nothing! For instance, in The Dumb Virgin, the deformed Belvideera meets the long-lost son of her father Rinaldo at a masquerade ball at the Duke's palace, and introduces him to her beautiful sister Maria, the dumb virgin, whose failure to talk is explained to her unrecognized brother as resulting from a vow of silence. Later, when the brother is involved through the ladies in a duel, which he fights at the back of St. Marks Church, he attracts the atten-

¹Collected Works of Aphra Behn, V:420 (London: Heinemann, 1915)

²The Royal Slave and Other Novels, p.303 (N.Y.: E.P. Dutton and Co., n.d.)

tion of Rinaldo, who is conveniently attending this church where his wife is buried. Rinaldo, who, of course, does not recognize his long-lost son, takes him home, and as they near the house, the young man sees in the window the beautiful Maria, garbed only in a loose nightgown. Rinaldo, being called away, leaves his son in the library, whither comes the night-gowned Maria to get a book. Thereupon the brother passionately declares his love for her, and she breaks away to a writing desk to write that she is dumb. In her ecstasy that he doesn't care, she lets him into her chamber, and later, when her sister comes home, hides him in her closet. However, a jealous suitor soon appears with the returning Rinaldo; the unrecognized son is searched for but seems gone - but just when he seems safe, his servant insists that he's still there because he appeared just a little while before at Maria's window. In the melee which follows, the son accidentally kills the father who, dying, recognizes the boy; and the sister Maria breaks the ligaments on her tongue and shrieks "Incest!" Here we have the triteness, flatness, bareness of setting, and also the dramatic utilization of stage properties which is characteristic of all these stories.

Occasionally there are touches of a more descriptive setting which, though still trite, have some slight emotional tone. Concerning interiors, we are told of the "cold marble"

floor by the grate at the convent,¹ of "a room whose only window was toward the garden and that too was grated with iron"², of another room where a father discovers "the candle set in the chimney and his son at the great open bay window"³, of still another bedroom where a girl, unable to get to bed soon enough to deceive a jealous suitor who suspects her of entertaining another man, turns "herself to her dressing table, where a candle stood and where lay a book open of the story of Adriadne and Theseus⁴, and, finally, of a chamber hung with black and lit by wax candles in such a way that there is illuminated the picture of a charming man before which the heroine sacrifices floods of tears.⁵ These, however, are exceptions. In these five novels Behn rarely makes any attempt at describing interior setting, is content to take refuge in generic locale or in generalization such as "in a room so unsuspected that they might as reasonably have imagined the entire walls of his house had a door made of stones, as there should have been one to that close apartment"⁶ or "a pretty house furnished with what was fitting for the reception of anybody of quality."⁷

¹Collected Works, V:266ff (History of Nun or Fair Vow Breaker)

²The Royal Slave and Other Novels, p.139 (The Nun or The Perjured Beauty)

³Ibid., p.327 (The Lucky Mistake)

⁴Ibid., p331 (" " " ")

⁵Collected Works, V:306 (History of the Nun etc.)

⁶The Royal Slave And Other Novels, p.153 (The Nun or F.B.)

⁷Collected Works, V:302 (History of Nun or F.V.B.)

Exterior setting is even more scant. Behn does mention "a most solitary part of the garden, by the melancholy fountain and in the most gloomy shades";¹ but what could be more general or trite? Usually, however, she is content with a mere stringing together of places and distances. One other outdoor scene should, perhaps, be mentioned as it shows her making a melodramatic and conventionally romantic use of the sea, which is in striking contrast to its realistic use by Head and later by Defoe. A barge, she tells us, sets out "in the evening with a prosperous gale, but a storm arising in the night soon separates the barge from its convoy." When pirates bear down upon this barge, the women break out in "piteous plaints, wailings, tremblings"; a servant, fastening together two planks that were used as seats, ties a child to them and plunges with his raft into the "fury of the merciless winds and waves"; the boat is captured, and the women are imprisoned "under hatches" where they sustain "the horrors of a thousand deaths by dreading one"; finally a Venetian Galley defeats the pirates - and the "joy of the poor ladies" is "ir-repressible."²

The five novels just discussed convey no sense of probability, or even of possibility, to the reader; they invariably read like pages from a heroic romance; their actions

¹The Royal Slave And Other Novels, p. 333 (The Lucky Mistake)

²Collected Works, V: 421-423 (The Dumb Virgin)

are the spectacular, melodramatic and completely improbable actions of such works; and their settings, as would be expected, are nothing more than mere conventional locales for heroic romance action - and the reader accepts them, if he accepts them at all, only as part of the paraphernalia of elaborate make-believe. In these novels we see Mrs Behn making no real attempt at gaining reader acceptance of the probability of the stories. As it will later be shown that she very gradually developed an interest in realistic setting used to promote narrative probability, it seems desirable to stop here a moment and conjecture why these novels do not show much of that interest. It may be that, in the midst of writing other novels (she did sometimes three and four a year), she stooped to an occasional sure-fire, pot-boiling venture in conventional romance without realistic trimmings; this is, I think, the way at least the first two of the novels under discussion came into being. Concerning the last three, it seems to me most likely that the physical suffering of the last few months of her life incapacitated her mentally for anything but an exercise in conventional form; it should also be considered that, after reaching her height in The Fair Jilt and Oroonoko, a slump was all too natural.

Novels With Realistic Setting

Despite her ventures in heroic romance, Mrs Behn shows, from 1683 when she wrote her first novel, a growing interest in gaining a semblance of reality in and through setting - though this interest does develop slowly and with perceptible lapses. In writing novels whose action takes place in locales known to her personally, she always makes a definite claim to realism; and despite the fact that quite frequently her narrative action and her characters bear a noticeable coloring of romance, she clearly attempts to make them probable to her readers by providing them with realistic setting. These novels first have their locale in London, then in London and rural England, then in rural England alone, and finally in Antwerp and in Dutch Guiana. The order, I think, is significant in that it shows her tendency to turn, as she grows older, from the artificiality of London to the more idyllic countryside, and finally to Antwerp and Guiana where she can re-capture the fresh, colorful excitement and the roseate coloring of romance with which youth, recalled in memory, tints actuality.

In most of the novels where England is the setting, Aphra Behn shows a minute and accurate knowledge of the geography of London and its environs, a fairly convincing knowledge of Somersetshire, and at least a passing acquaintance with Lancashire and Staffordshire, - Hampshire also being

mentioned. The careful reader will see, however, that in the earliest of these novels she is content with little more realism than comes from naming actual places in London, and that there gradually and somewhat spasmodically develops an interest in colorful, realistic background which culminates in The Fair Jilt and Oroonoko, written just about five years after her first novel of London setting. Professor Baker, it seems to me, is somewhat misleading when he says: "But her stories (previous to Oroonoko) had been characterized by a bareness, a lack of circumstance and atmosphere, which she was now to remedy in Oroonoko, by taking the more leisurely pace allowed by romance and by furnishing the drama with an elaborate setting."¹ Too often, students of Oroonoko are led by this to assume a wonderful, over-night blooming of local color in the mind of Mrs Behn. The evidence to follow will show that this view is untenable.

As early as 1683 she is writing of London, mentioning Soho, 'The Rose' in Covent Garden, The Exchange, Bridge Street, Locket's - the ordinary at Charing Cross, and 'The Star' on Fish-Street Hill. Of The Adventure of the Black Lady, in which these occur, Baker remarks : "It has the look of a bit of life only a little dressed up."² The dressing up, however, does not take place through setting, for not one of these places is

¹E.A.Baker,History of the Novel, III:89-90

²Ibid., p.85

described. Nevertheless, we should remember that to the Londoner of Mrs Behn's day the place names themselves may have supplied considerable color. In her next work, the light, rollicking extravaganza The Court of King Bantam, she uses the same method, mentioning The Strand, Charing Cross, 'The Rose', and a rich and modishly furnished lodging in Jermain Street, Temple Bar. Here, though, is added a slight touch of local color; she pictures her characters at Christmas time with "a flask or two of claret before them, and oranges roasting by a large fire."¹ In The Unfortunate Happy Lady (1685) she mentions Soho Square, The Savoy, Councillor Fairlaw's house in Great-Lincolns-Inn Fields, Eugenia's country house near Dartford, and Putney; and adds descriptions of Lady Bedlam's Enchanted Castle in London (ie - stylish whore house for rich men). In this house there were a parlor where the "furniture was very modish and rich", a garden where "a very fine dessert of sweetmeats and fruits" was served to the young ladies in one of the arbours, and Philadelphia's bedroom - "a very pleasant chamber, richly hung and curiously adorned with the pictures of several beautiful young ladies, wherein was a bed which might have been worthy the reception of a Duchess" and off which were "the antechamber and the little withdrawing room."² Here it was that Philadelphia, not know-

¹The Royal Slave And Other Novels, p.353

²Collected Works, V:40, 43

ing what type of house it was, was scared by the sounds of revelry by night, and next day was advanced on by Gracelove whom she won over to taking her away and protecting her. In still another novel, The Unfortunate Bride (1686-1688) - a swiftly moving narrative of the Enoch Arden type, in which the long-lost man slays his wife and her new husband - a large part of the action takes place in London; here, however, though the narrative is better than usual, no attempt is made at describing setting. Finally, in The Unhappy Mistake, written during the same period, there is also comparatively little London setting, Behn being content to tell us of the Tower Ditch, the Gun Tavern, and a tavern in Leadenhall Street where there was "a large room with cold vapors."¹ Why setting falls off in these last two novels, we can only conjecture, but it seems possible that Mrs Behn may not have been equal at first to the problems of a widening locale; it should also be remembered that between the writing of these two works - and possibly before - she was engaged in composing The Wandering Beauty, her best story of the English countryside and one that has quite convincing local color at least in places - and it may be that this monopolized her attention.

The action of The Unfortunate Bride and of The Unhappy Mistake, though largely set in London, spreads out to the Eng-

¹Collected Works, V:499

lish countryside. In the first, a little of the action occurs in Cambridge while Staffordshire is mentioned; in the second, the scene is Somerset, - but save for the mention of the Bowls where father and son play cricket, and of two houses twenty miles apart, "with a large elm tree one hundred paces"¹ from one of them, there is no real setting.² However, in The Wandering Beauty, a novel probably written between the two last mentioned, we see a definite advance in setting technique, which prepares the way for Behn's work in The Fair Jilt and Oroonoko where she reaches her height in painting locale.

Mr. Wagenknecht well remarks:

If you love the quiet charm of the English countryside, if you relish in fiction British farm life, you must not neglect even the quite uncelebrated tale The Wandering Beauty. There is power here and there is charm - and much more charm, on the whole, than one finds, except here and there in scattered scenes, in her plays.³

The story is that of a young girl Arabella, who, to escape marriage with a gentleman of fifty, wandered off from her home on a large estate in Somersetshire. At eight o'clock on the evening of her first day's walk (she left home at 2 P.M.) she had gone ten miles north. Here at a "little cottage, the poor but cleanly habitation of a husbandman and his wife,"⁴ she spent the night. Though there is no extended description of setting, we get bits of local color: the hardness of her bed, the rising at 4 A.M. when the daughter of the house got up

¹ Collected Works, V:477-78

² It is interesting to note, however, that we have several pages of Somerset dialect accurately reported. (p.493ff)

³ E. Wagenknecht, "In Praise of Mrs Behn", Colophon, XVIII no pagination (September '34)

⁴ Collected Works, V:450

to work, the swapping of clothes between Arabella and the daughter - Arabella getting two pinners (coifs with two long flaps to the breast) and a straw hat, the breakfast on "a mess of warm milk", and Arabella's departure with provisions and some green "wall-nuts" in a "little course [sic] linnen bag".¹ All this provides convincing atmosphere for the story and is obviously to be considered part of the setting. On the second day, Arabella slowed down (convincingly enough for a girl of the upper class) - and we are told that "near 12 at noon she came to a pleasant meadow through which ran a little rivulet of clear water, about nine miles from her last lodgings."² Here she sat down; drank from the stream; broke the walnut shells and smeared her hands, face and arms with the juice so as to disguise her fair skin; and sighed and lamented as she looked "into the little purling stream that seemed to murmur at the injury she did to so much beauty."³ From this point on, the setting is less effective, but there are touches worth noting. Arabella, after washing her feet to refresh them,

continued her journey for ten miles more, which she compassed by seven a clock; when she came to a village where she got entertainment for that night, paying for it, and the next morning before six, as soon as she had filled her little bag with what good cheer the place afforded, she wandered till twelve again, still crossing the country. ... After she had refreshed herself for an hour's time by the side of a wood, she arose and wandered again near

¹ Collected Works, V:450-51

² Ibid., V:452

³ Idem.

twelve miles by eight a clock and lodged at a good substantial farmers.¹

So she continued for a fortnight. The mathematically-minded reader will calculate that if she kept up this schedule, she walked about 240 miles; the distance from the south of Somerset to the north of Lancashire is about 190 miles as the crow flies, but it would be further by road - so we may credit Mrs Behn with a fairly accurate estimate of the time required. At Lancashire the setting fades still more: we are told only of the house of Sir Christian Kindly where Arabella stayed for three years and where she finally got married. There are, however, one or two suggestions of reality: "a royal health or two" that went around the cleared dinner table, "the neatness of the walks and the beauty of the flowers in the gardens", the week's wedding celebration at Sir Christian's - and then at Sir Lucius' for as long as the guests would stay, and the distribution by Sir Lucius of money to the servants and the poor.² The story then shifts southward; "in five or six days by the help of a coach and six" they got to Cornwall³ (whether they

¹ Idem.

² Collected Works, V:458-62

³ The introduction of Cornwall setting is confusing. At the beginning of the story Arabella's parents' estate is in "the west of England" (p.447). Later she tells Sir Kindly "truly" she comes from Somerset (p.453). Yet after marriage, they find her parents in Cornwall (p.464), and Arabella seems to have planned the discovery through familiarity with the country. It seems unlikely that they would change estates, but perhaps we were meant to assume that they had two. If not, Behn made a mistake in location.

stopped at Somerset and found Arabella's people gone, we don't know) where they lodged "in a little town of little accommodation for the first night."¹ The next day Arabella sent her husband to visit the estate of Sir Francis Fairname, offering the excuse that she must try to get in touch with her parents. Sir Lucius, of course, discovered his wife's picture there, and made the old people glad by bringing back their daughter - and we have a reunion in "the outer court".² Obviously, the Somerset setting is the most colorful part of The Wandering Beauty - and there is enough of it to suggest an interest in native rural setting as a background for fiction, and as a means of adding to the seeming probability of the narrative.

In The Fair Jilt and Oroonoko Mrs Behn's interest in setting continues and reaches its height. In both she shows a great advance in the piling up of detail for background; in both, strangely enough, she gives us both realistic and purely romantic settings. The Antwerp novel, The Fair Jilt, is a most peculiar mixture of French romancing, and a circumstantial realism behind which I would not be surprised to find an account, yet undiscovered, of actual events in Antwerp - probably at the time of Mrs Behn's spy activities there. The Fair Jilt starts off, conventionally and impossibly enough, in a convent

¹ Collected Works, V: 464

² Ibid., V: 467

of the Begines' Order of Galloping Nuns where young ladies of social standing may go for a certain period and with no obligations to continue under the veil; Behn describes it as a "palace holding 1500-2000 girls"¹ and tells also of lovers singing under the windows. Miranda, the fair jilt, falls in love with a priest (who, we soon discover, is a disappointed nobleman who has taken orders) but is repulsed. Determined, however, to get her man, she goes to church - and here Mrs Behn gives us a fairly detailed, though conventional, setting, and makes powerful dramatic use of it:

He could not refuse her; and led her into the sacristy, where there is a confession-chair, in which he seated himself; and on one side of him she kneeled down, over against a little altar, where the priests' robes lie, on which were placed some lighted wax candles, that made the little place very light and splendid, which shone full upon Miranda.²

Of this background, dramatic use is made: Miranda speaks eloquently of her love for the priest, who refuses her. Then she snatches him in her arms, kisses him, and runs to put out the candles. Admitting her appeal, he continues to admonish her, and speaks of his vow of chastity. Undaunted, she throws herself into the confessional chair, pulls him into her lap, and cries "Rape!" People crowd to the door of the sacristy, clamor for admittance - but the door is shut "with a spring lock on the inside."³ Finally, the priests rush in from a door on the

¹The Royal Slave And Other Novels, p.86

²Ibid., p.101-02

³Ibid., p.105

other side to find their brother priest seemingly in the act of rape - and he is imprisoned "in a dark and dismal dungeon."¹

From here on, the settings grow more colorful and realistic, and seem as if they may well have been based on actual occurrences which Mrs Behn witnessed or which she read of. In the following, Miranda, who has now married Prince Tarquin, is on the way to church:

When the Princess went to church, she had her gentleman bare before her, carrying a great velvet cushion, with great golden tassels, for her to kneel on, and her train borne up a most prodigious length, led by a gentleman usher, bare; followed by innumerable footmen, pages, and women. And in this state she would walk in the streets, as in those countries it is the fashion for great ladies to do, who are well; and in her train, two or three coaches, and perhaps a rich velvet chair embroidered, would follow in state.²

Thus Mrs Behn shows Miranda's love of pomp, which motivates her plotting to have her sister Alcidiana killed for her fortune. A few pages later we have another effective, realistic scene; the page whom Miranda hired is convicted of trying to poison Alcidiana - and the setting for the punishment of the plotters is sketched as follows:

The page [was] to be hanged till he was dead, on a gibbet in the market place; and the Princess to stand under the gibbet, with a rope about her neck, the other end of which was to be fastened to the gibbet where the page was hanging; and to have an inscription, in large characters, upon her back and breast, of the cause why; where she was to stand from ten in the morning till twelve....one need not tell of the abundance of people who were flocked together in the market place. And all the windows were taken down, and filled with spectators, and the tops of houses; when

¹Ibid., p.108

²Ibid., p.112-113

at the hour appointed the fatal beauty appeared [dress is described]....A gentleman carried her great velvet ~~velvet~~ cushion before her, on which her prayer book, embroidered, was laid; her train was borne up by a page, and the Prince led her, bare; followed by his footman, pages, and other officers of his house.

When they arrived at the place of execution, the cushion was laid on the ground, upon a Portugal mat, spread there for that purpose; and the Princess stood on the cushion, with her prayer book in her hand, and a priest by her side, and was accordingly tied up to the gibbet.

The page then mounts the execution ladder - and later Miranda is "conducted to her own house in great state, with a dozen white wax flambeaux about her chair."¹

A second attempt on Alcidiana's life is made by Tarquin. For this, though the setting is not so colorful, it is convincingly circumstantial and has, in several details, a realistic ring:

....at the corner of the Stadt House, near the theatre.... it was almost dark, day was just shutting up her beauties, and left such a light to govern the world, as served only just to distinguish one object from another, and a convenient help to mischief....The lady ran into the playhouse and left Alcidiana to be conducted by her lover into it, who led her to the door, and went to give some order to the coachman, when she stood the fairest mark in the world, on the threshold of the entrance to the theatre, there being many coaches about the door, so that hers could not come so near. [Tarquin] went behind the great coaches, and when he came over against the door, through a great booted velvet coach that stood between him and her, he shot.²

Finally, we have the scene of Tarquin's near execution (he escapes, improbably enough, through a false stroke of the headsman):

¹Ibid., p.119-120

²Ibid., p.123-124

When he came to the market place, whither he walked on foot, followed by his own domestics, and some bearing a black velvet coffin with silver hinges; the headsman before him with his fatal scimitar drawn, his confessor by his side and many gentlemen and churchmen, with Father Francisco attending him, the people showering millions of blessings on him, and beholding him with weeping eyes, he mounted the scaffold; which was strewn with some sawdust, about the place where he was to kneel, to receive the blood. For they behead people kneeling and with a back stroke of a scimitar; and not lying on a block, and with an axe as we in England. The scaffold had a low rail about it, that everybody might more conveniently see. This was hung with black, and all that state that such a death could have, was here in most decent order.¹

Professor Baker calls the scene of which this is a part "false, lurid, and depraved"², and morally it is so; yet the colorful detail of the coffin, the sawdust, and the low rail of the scaffold draped in black provides a rich and not improbable setting for a quite improbable occurrence. Regardless of our judgment concerning the actuality of the settings in The Fair Jilt, we must admit that here we have greater massed color, and more minute pictorial background than in any of Mrs Behn's earlier novels, and that several of the settings add to the probability of the latter part of the narrative.

In Oroonoko, Mrs Behn continues to pile up colorful and realistic setting. This is not the place to debate at length on the probability or the extent of truth in her claim that she knew from personal experience all things related therein. At present, an overwhelming weight of evidence is in favor

¹ Ibid., p. 130-31

² Ibid., p. xxvi

of Mrs Behn's having lived in Surinam, and against Professor Bernbaum's early hypothesis that she never saw the place but made up the story of Oroonoko and got her local color from George Warren's Impartial Description of Surinam. Personally, I think it almost certain, that, as far as the setting goes, she did refresh her memory from this work; that she even followed it in some errors because of her flair for the spectacular and the miraculous; and that she was pleased to let time tint her memories with rosy hue as she looked back longingly to the days of youth and action that were no more, - "reviving even as she wept with pain, the memory of that country where all things by nature were rare, delightful and wonderful."¹

We find in Oroonoko, as in The Fair Jilt, a strange mixture of improbable romancing of setting and of realistic local color - and we find them in about the same order. Blashfield correctly remarks that "the description of Coramantien (the native land of Oroonoko) reads like a concession to convention" but that the rest of the novel has the accent of realism.² As in her novels patterned on French romances, we have in Behn's description of Coramantien mere conventional phrases suggestive more of the court of an eastern potentate than of a tropical tribe: the court; the royal apartment; the bath with a canopy over it and with marble at the brink of it,

¹J.M.Sackville-West, Aphra Behn, the incomparable Astrea, p.31 (N.Y.: Viking Press, 1928)

²E.W.Blashfield, Portraits and Backgrounds, p.245. (N.Y.: Scribner's, 1917)

where the king receives Imoinda; Otan, palace of the king's women, with its orange grove, and its "bed of state with sweets and flowers for the dalliance of the king" - and its luxurious carpet on which the fair Imoinda may trip, fall into the arms of Oroonoko, and so make the king jealous; - all this is the clap-trap of trite romance as is "the boat richly adorned with carpets and velvet cushions" in which Oroonoko is taken as guest to the slave ship to the tune of music and trumpets, and then made prisoner.¹ This is the sort of thing that Mrs Manley and Mrs Haywood, Mrs Behn's so-called followers, generally used for setting in novels whose only claim to realism seems to rest on the fact that their authors were mongers of scandal purportedly seen in the lives of some of their famous contemporaries, who appear under other names in the novels but are supposedly easily identified.²

No one can brand the description of Surinam, however, as equally trite and conventional as that of Coramantien. It is undoubtedly true that Behn made a few ludicrous mistakes in her geography, flora, fauna, climate and topography - a fact which Bernbaum explains by saying that her invention, when she was not following Warren, shows her lack of knowledge.³ The falseness of this explanation, however, Platt's evidence of Mrs Behn's accuracy on minor details of the location of plan-

¹The Royal Slave And Other Novels, pp. 7, 12, 13, 18, 22, 34.

²For a more detailed discussion of setting in the novels of Mrs Manley and Mrs Haywood see the Appendix.

³E. Bernbaum, "Mrs Behn's Oroonoko" in Kittredge Anniversary Papers, pp. 419-33. (Boston, Ginn and Company, 1913)

tations and so forth not dealt with by Warren will indicate.¹

But I cannot accept Platt's contention that Behn made errors because she was not sufficiently interested in setting:

People were Mrs Behn's province. Things, material objects and relationships she does not handle so happily. Her backgrounds are often indistinct and unemphasized. As a dramatist she is strangely lacking in a sense of graphic or plastic art. In her plays one finds almost no tableaux, no pictorial or plastic effects. The characters move in a scene so utterly conventional, so utterly unimportant that it almost loses its reality. If the exigencies of plot demand a piece of furniture, a picture or a bed, the bit of furniture is materialized from a neutral background by a bald stage direction, but it remains strictly utilitarian, present not for its own artistic effect but purely for the use of the actors. Even in the novels, descriptions other than those of people are not generally effective. Usually they are utterly conventional, no matter how high flown, a mere duty done. So if Mrs Behn got help in working up her scenery and local color, if she made common mistakes in climate, foliage, animals, and topography, the reason is that she was not sufficiently interested in such matters to give them her real attention.²

If this is true, it is indeed a paradox: Mrs Behn writing the first important local color novel of the noble savage type - and not being interested in local color. Its falseness is, I believe, already indicated by the evidence I have presented: evidence which shows a growth of interest in gaining realism through setting. That Behn was not always accurate may be explained by several facts. First, as Canby points out³, the theory of romantic character and romantic intrigue was so strongly lodged in her that she had a constant, subconscious

¹H.G. Platt, Jr., "Astrea and Celadon", P.M.L.A. XLIX: 550 (June 1934)

²Ibid., p. 549

³H.S. Canby, The Short Story in England, p. 166 (N.Y.: Henry Holt and Co., 1909)

impulse to introduce settings of romance and realism in different threads of the same story - and even to color over her realistic background with romantic touches. Second, as Blashfield points out, after a lapse of twenty years one may perhaps be pardoned if, looking back to his youth, he mistakes a tiger for a jaguar, or makes a few errors in geography.¹ Third, as I have earlier indicated, Mrs Behn may have been inclined to gloss over with rosy hue her treasured memories of better days when she was young and in good health. Fourth, with her flair for the spectacular and knowing the public interest in thrillers, she may not have been able to resist the introduction of a few wonders - especially when that introduction somewhat lessened the gap between romantic character and action and the basic realism of background. Blashfield would also add that her stress on the luxuriance of Surinam may have been greater because of "the scanty coals and tallow dips of little, damp, poverty-stricken Wye" where she was born²; to me, however, this seems like romancing far beyond that of Mrs Behn's, for we know nothing of the conditions of her childhood.

Despite her admitted mistakes and inaccuracies, she gains such convincing verisimilitude of setting in Oroonoko that Johnson, in The Journal of Negro History, remarks that her "description of life in the tropics is almost photographic."³

¹ E.W.Blashfield, op.cit., p.147

² Ibid., p.143

³ E.D.Johnson, "Aphra Behn's Oroonoko", Journal of Negro History, X:336. (July 1925)

Especially does he refer to the following description of the 'continent' of Surinam:

It is a continent, whose vast extent was never yet known, and may contain more noble earth than all the universe besides; for, they say, it reaches from east to west one way as far as China, and another to Peru. It affords all things both for beauty and use; it is there eternal spring, always the very months of April, May and June; the shades are perpetual, the trees bearing at once all degrees of leaves, and fruit, from blooming buds to ripe autumn: groves of oranges, lemons, citrons, figs, nutmegs, and noble aromatics, continually bearing their fragrance: the trees appearing all like nosegays, adorned with flowers of different kinds; some are all white, some purple, some scarlet, some blue, some yellow; bearing at the same time ripe fruit, and blooming young, or producing every day new. The very wood of all these trees has an intrinsic value, above common timber; for they are, when cut, of different colors, glorious to behold, and bear a price considerable to inlay withal. Besides this they yield rich balm and gums; so that we make our candles of such an aromatic substance, as does not only give a sufficient light, but as they burn, they cast their perfumes all about. Cedar is the common firing and all the houses are built with it. The very meat we eat when set on the table, if it be native, I mean of the country, perfumes the whole room; especially a little beast called an Armadillo, a thing which I can liken to nothing as well as a rhinoceros; it is all in white armour, so jointed, that it moves as well in it as if it had nothing on. This beast is about the bigness of a pig of six weeks old.¹

This is surely reality slightly tinted over with the rosy color of recollection and romantic exaggeration - but it has a convincing probability to the reader who longs for, and has not been to, far away lands; and probability is the literary quality to be commended in realistic fiction - not actuality.

Of Surinam setting Mrs Behn gives us two more, extended colorful descriptions. (I purposely omit here any mention of

¹The Royal Slave And Other Novels, p.50-51

customs of war, love, and religion - for, though they furnish background, they are more expository than descriptive.) The first is as follows:

We caress them [the native inhabitants] with all the brotherly and friendly affection in the world, trading with them for their fish, venison, buffaloes skins and little rarities; as marmosets, a sort of monkey, as big as a rat or weasel, but of a marvelous and delicate shape, having face and hands like a human creature; and couch-eries, a little beast in the form and fashion of a lion, as big as a kitten, but so exactly made in all parts like that noble beast that it is it in miniature: then for little parrakeets, great parrots, mackaws, and a thousand other birds and beasts of wonderful and surprizing forms, shapes and colors: for skins of prodigious snakes, of which there are some three score yards in length as is the skin of one that may be seen at his Majesty's Anti-quary's; where are also some rare flies of amazing forms and colors, presented to them by myself: some as big as my fist, some less.... These we trade for feathers, which they order into all shapes, making themselves little short habits of them and glorious wreaths for their heads, necks, arms, and legs, whose tinctures are inconceivable. I had a set of these presented to me, and I gave them to the King's Theatre; it was the dress of the Indian Queen, infinitely admired by persons of quality, and was inimitable. We dealt with them with beads of all colors, knives, axes, pins, and needles, which they used only to drill holes with in their ears, noses and lips, where they hang a great many little things, as long beads, bits of tin, brass or silver beat thin, or any shining trinket. The beads they weave into aprons about a quarter of an ell long, and of the same breadth; working them very prettily in flowers of several colors; which apron they wear just before them as Adam and Eve did the fig leaves, the men wearing a long strip of linnen, which they deal with us for. They thread these beads also on long cotton threads, and make girdles to tie their aprons to, which come twenty times or more about the waist, and then cross, like a shoulder belt, both ways, and round their necks, arms, and legs. This adornment, with their long black hair, and the face painted in little specks or flowers here and there, makes them a wonderful figure to behold. Some of the beauties, which indeed are finely shaped, as almost all are, and who have pretty features, are charming and novel; for they have all that is

called beauty, except the color, which is a reddish yellow; or after a new oiling, which they often use to themselves, they are of the color of a new brick, but smooth, soft, and sleek.¹

This is certainly circumstantial and convincing to anyone who is desirous of escape from the gray Here to the blue There. And if, as Professor Bernbaum states, the natives of Surinam did not make aprons or paint their faces in flower specks, Behn is to be commended for taking details of somewhat similar tribes and so heightening the effect (not falsifying it, for Oroonoko is an ideal noble savage and the novel itself is part of the novel-with-a-purpose tradition, which calls for stress on characteristics and minimization of non-essential differences). It should be noted that this setting is put to a rather curious use, being thrown in at the beginning of the novel to arouse interest, after which Behn backtracks to Oroonoko in his native Coramantien; I conjecture that it was her way of announcing to her readers that here was something new - a point they might easily have missed had they merely glanced at a work starting with a description of the improbable Coramantien.

The third long description is the following one of Mrs Behn's own home, St. John's Hill. This is also most circumstantially detailed and well unified, and has a dominant tone; to be sure, it shows influences of conventional idyllicism, yet not more than is to be expected if we assume that Mrs Behn was

¹The Royal Slave And Other Novels, pp. 2-3.

trying to recapture the freshness and romance of youth.

It stood on a vast rock of white marble, at the foot of which the river ran a vast depth down, and not to be descended on that side; the little waves still dashing and washing the foot of this rock, made the softest murmurs and purlings in the world; and the opposite bank was adorned with such vast quantities of different flowers eternally blowing, and every day and hour new, fenced behind them with lofty trees of a thousand rare forms and colors, that the prospect was the most ravishing that fancy can create. On the edge of this white rock, was a walk, or grove, of orange and lemon trees, about half the length of the Mall here, whose flowery and fruit-bearing branches met at the top, and hindered the sun, whose rays are very fierce there, from entering a beam into the grove; and the cool air that came from the river made it not only fit to entertain people in at all the hottest hours of the day, but refreshed the sweet blossoms and made it always sweet and charming; and sure the whole globe of the world can not show so delightful a place as this grove was: not all the gardens of boasted Italy can produce a shade to outvie this, which nature has joined with art to render so exceeding fine; and it is a marvel to see how such vast trees, as big as English oaks, could take footing on so solid a rock and in so little earth as covered that rock.¹

These settings quoted from Oroonoko have charm, color, dominant emotional tone, and unification - and show what a long way Mrs Behn had come in developing a technique for producing realism through convincing backgrounds. Taken together with those in The Fair Jilt, they reveal that she achieved more conscious skill in setting than she has been

¹Ibid., p.51-52. I am not very much concerned about Bernbaum's insistence that there is no white rock of marble in Surinam - but only a white crystal tower of sandstone, far in the interior (or that Mrs Behn left out waterfalls, orchids, and palms that do exist there; that she doesn't mention rainy seasons; or that she elaborates on Warren and vies with Sir Walter Raleigh in her exaggeration). No one would contend that Mrs Behn provides pure naturalism in setting : hers is the greater art of giving enough of the actual to be convincing, and building upon it so as to produce an effective illusion of actuality.

given credit for. Yet in all fairness we must note that the settings in Oroonoko are, for the most part, mere background, and are not used to influence directly either character or action. In The Fair Jilt Aphra Behn showed slightly greater skill in getting interaction between, and fusion of, action, character and setting; in Oroonoko she seems content to surpass The Fair Jilt in color, emotional tone, and unity of detail without making any attempt at vital interaction. She does, of course, tell us that during her visit with Oroonoko to a native Indian town composed of huts situated along the river and hidden "by thick weeds and flowers that grew on the banks"¹, the natives "gathered a leaf of a tree, called a Sarumbo leaf, of six yards long, and spread it on the ground for a table cloth; and cutting another in pieces instead of plates, set us on low Indian stools, which they cut out of one entire piece of wood, and paint in a sort of Japan work."² And she does inform us of reporting to the governor the news, gained from Indians, that gold dust came streaming in little channels down distant mountains accessible only through the Amazon River.³ But all this has nothing to do with any significant action of Oroonoko. So we are left with a single illustration in Oroonoko of setting used to motivate the action: Oroonoko lays the body of Imoinda "decently on leaves and flowers",

¹The Royal Slave And Other Novels, p.57

²Ibid., p.59

³Ibid., p.61

of which he makes a bed, and conceals it "under the same lid of nature"; then in the heat of the burning sun, the body begins to decompose and through the odor the searchers discover Oroonoko's location¹; and Oroonoko is warned of their approach by the noise of rustling "leaves that lie thick on the ground through continual falling."² We may conclude, then, that settings in Oroonoko are primarily background.

Conclusion

The evidence presented seems to indicate that whereas Mrs Behn has generally been thought of as turning out, somewhat miraculously, one local color novel, the only tenable conclusion after a study of her works, is that she gradually developed an interest in setting, that interest reaching its height in The Fair Jilt and Oroonoko - and fading only because she was physically unable thereafter to concentrate more than is necessary to turn out pot-boilers of the French romance type. Because of the fact that she wrote three or four novels in a single year, we cannot expect the development in technique to be apparent novel by novel - but let the reader compare setting in The Black Lady, The Unfortunate Happy Lady, The Wandering Beauty, and The Fair Jilt and Oroonoko (works that come, with the exception of the last two, at least a year apart) and

¹Ibid., p. 75ff

²Ibid., p. 77

he will find, I believe, clear evidence of that development.

Mrs Behn's importance in the development of realistic fictional setting may be summed up as follows: she achieved at times (as we have seen others do before her) a sense of probability for her stories by using actual places, often merely mentioning them, but sometimes providing minute and convincing colorful detail which appears to have a strong basis in actuality. English locales, both of city and country, she did not overlook, though in her use of them she shows no advance over her predecessors, except possibly in her brief touches of English rural life. Much of her most probable detail she drew from her own travels, reinforcing it, most likely, by employing travel-book materials. This makes her an important link in the development of the fictional utilization of travel-book material begun by Head and later made by Defoe the basis of a new fictional technique; her method of linking minute detail in a continuous chain to produce probability is further evidence that the embryo of Defoe's famed circumstantial method was present in travel-book material, and was developing somewhat before his time in her work and that of Head. Mrs Behn's greatest claim to fame, however, is that she produced the first tropical local color novel, and showed how personal travel and the materials gained from travel reports could be utilized to produce a fairly convincing, unified story,

something which Head had not accomplished. What Nashe had achieved much earlier, she achieved in Oroonoko and to a lesser extent in her other works; she made romanticized characters and events which, taken by themselves, would frequently have been declared improbable, take on, for long periods at least, a seeming reality. Through her settings she was able, at times, to bridge the gap between romantic action and every-day life, and to make the reader feel that what she portrayed was life-like.

VII

JOSEPH ADDISON AND RICHARD STEELE

The Sir Roger De Coverley Papers, which appeared in The Spectator at intervals throughout the years 1711 and 1712, have long been recognized as an important landmark in the development of fictional characterization. In them Addison, and, to a lesser extent, Steele, ably demonstrated that traits of character could be brought out in narrative in such a way as to give a well-rounded picture of a fictional personage; and this picture--unlike pamphleteer caricatures which stressed external physical detail and unlike those characterizations by Nashe, Deloney, Behn and others where one or two traits were stressed but where no well rounded personality was evolved--mirrored a complex and integrated character. In this achievement, setting, for the first time, was called upon to play an important part in characterization. Earlier in our discussion we saw how Greene had used setting in one instance to help produce character change, how Deloney had implied that character change was influenced by setting and how Defoe had shown the influence of setting on character attitudes and moods; but before 1711 well-rounded characterization in narrative was largely neglected and so the part that setting could play therein had gone largely undiscovered. Addison and Steele, then, became important pioneers, as we shall later see in detail, in opening up a new field for setting.

First, however, it seems desirable to consider some more general aspects of the setting of the Sir Roger De Coverly Papers. Addison and Steele continued to use extensively the old standbys: generic places and place names proper. They often set their scenes by merely mentioning a hedge, a road, a stile, a church or churchyard, a coffee house, a court bench, neighboring woods, the bowling green at a neighboring market town, or the great yard of a country house; to these they added, especially when writing of London, proper place names such as The Grecian, The Cocoa-Tree, Drury Lane, Haymarket, The Exchange, Soho Square, Anne's Lane, Gray's-Inn Walks, Fleet Street, Temple-stairs or Fox-hall.

Infrequently, more detailed setting is used merely to afford a background for the relation of an incident which throws light on the reactions of the principal character. When Steele, for instance, wishes to show Sir Roger's distrust of women as confidants, the shrewd practicality which is often his when dealing with his tenants, and his penchant for benevolent meddling, he leads up to his main incident in the following way:

This agreeable seat is surrounded with so many pleasing walks, which are struck out of a wood, in the midst of which the house stands, that one can hardly ever be weary of wandering from one labyrinth of delight to another....This state of mind was I in, ravished with the murmur of waters, the whisper of breezes, the singing of birds; and whether I looked up to the heavens, down on the earth, or turned to the prospects around me, still struck with new sense of pleasure; when I found by the voice of my friend, who walked by me, that we had insensibly strolled into the grove sacred to the widow.

Since in an earlier paper this grove has been described in some detail, Steele does not stop for further extended description, but continues his story, adding a few minor details of setting as it progresses: Hearing lovers' voices the strollers hide in a close thicket near a transparent fountain where a young huntsman, apostrophizing the reflection of a young woman in the water, is threatening to drown himself if she does not smile. As Sir Roger and his friend continue to watch, the young woman, alarmed, looks up, and her lover leaps over the fountain, and embraces her; thereupon she complains that she knew he would not drown himself till he had taken leave of one Susan Holiday, of whom she is jealous. The huntsman defends himself, crying out "Don't, my dear, believe a word Kate Willow says; she is spiteful and makes stories just to hear me talk to herself for your sake...." Now at the point of his story, Steele has Sir Roger exclaim to his companion: "Look you here, do you see there, all mischief comes from confidants! But let us not interrupt them; the maid is honest and the man dares not be otherwise: for he knows I loved her father. I will interpose in this matter and hasten the wedding." The initial setting for this story¹, though not greatly particularized, has a definite emotional tone and forms a convincing background. The main incident has little setting accompanying it, but the fountain device is used dramatically

¹Spectator #118, July 16, 1711

and may be regarded as a variation of the mirror device used by Nashe, Brewer, and Behn and to be used by Defoe, Richardson and Fielding. In addition it should be remembered that in Spectator #110 Addison had already described the grove where the fountain is located, and that in Spectator #113 he had indicated that Sir Roger had once carved his beloved widow's name on trees there and that he was wont to muse on her there; it can therefore be seen that the incident related above occurs in a background whose emotional tone has been carefully prepared in preceding papers.

With the description of the aforementioned grove we come to a discussion of Addison and Steele's most important and most frequent use of setting--to evoke reactions indicative of character traits:

At a little distance from Sir Roger's house, among the ruins of an old abbey, there is a long walk of aged elms; which are shot up so very high, that when one passes under them, the rooks and crows that rest upon the tops of them seem to be cawing in another region. I am very much delighted with this sort of noise, which I consider as a kind of natural prayer to that Being who supplies the wants of his whole creation, and who, in the beautiful language of the Psalms, feedeth the young ravens that call upon him...

My good friend the butler desired me with a very grave face not to venture myself in it after sun-set, for that one of the footmen had been almost frightened out of his wits by a spirit that appeared to him in the shape of a black horse without an head; to which he added that about a month ago one of the maids coming home late that way with a pail of milk upon her head, heard such a rustling among the bushes that she let it fall.

....the ruins of the abbey are scattered up and down on every side, and half-covered with ivy and elder bushes, the harbours of several solitary birds which seldom make their appearance till the dusk of the evening. The place was formerly a church-yard, and has still several marks in it of graves and burrying places. There is such an echo among the old ruins and vaults, that if you stamp

but a little louder than ordinary, you hear the sound repeated. At the same time the walk of elms, with the croaking of the ravens which from time to time are heard from the tops of them, looks exceeding solemn and venerable. These objects naturally raise seriousness and attention; and when night heightens the awfulness of the place, and pours out her supernumerary horrors upon everything in it, I do not at all wonder that weak minds fill it with spectres and apparitions.¹

This Gothic 'graveyard' setting, a type we have seen put to several uses by Deloney and Dekker, is here distinctive and well unified: it is, moreover, put to a new use in that it reveals, through character reaction to it, the superstitious nature of the servants on Sir Roger's estate, and the scorn of superstition by the educated visitor who nevertheless feels awed by it and is put by it into a mood of religious contemplation. As has earlier been indicated, this setting also habitually arouses in Sir Roger a mood of melancholy meditation on his lost love, and so brings out his bashful sentimentality.

Sir Roger's scorn of superstition is also brought out by Addison through the use of setting: The Spectator and Sir Roger go to a fortune-teller's hovel, which "stood in a solitary corner under the side of a wood". They enter, and Sir Roger, winking, points out an old broom-stick and whispers that the tabby cat sitting in the chimney corner lies under as bad report as the fortune teller herself.²

¹Spectator # 110, July 6, 1711

²Spectator # 117, July 14, 1711

The Spectator's delight in the country, and especially in the spectacle of riding to the hounds, is brought out vividly in another paper, as is his insistence on taking his pleasure 'innocently' instead of joining in the kill; this latter trait, indeed, stamps him at once as different from his companions. The picture of the hunt, moreover, is in itself rich in the color of a distinctive pastime of rural England:

After we had rid about a mile from home we came upon a large heath, and the sportsmen began to beat. They had done so for some time, when, as I was at a little distance from the company, I saw a hare pop out from a small furze-brake almost under my horse's feet....

This [his distaste for the kill], with my aversion to leaping hedges, made me withdraw to a rising ground, from whence I could have the picture of the whole chase, without the fatigue of keeping in with the hounds....Our hare took a large field just under us, followed by the full cry in view. I must confess the brightness of the weather, the cheerfulness of everything around me, the chiding of the hounds, which was returning upon us in a double echo from two neighboring hills, with the hallooing of the sportsmen, and the sounding of the horn, lifted my spirits into a most lively pleasure, which I freely indulged because I was sure it was innocent.¹

Other traits of Sir Roger are brought out vividly by his reaction to distinctive settings which he comes across in one of his trips about London. First we see his deep concern for the religious state of the people, a concern made more touching when we recall his own efforts to inculcate religion in his tenants:

After some short pause, the old knight, turning about his head twice or thrice, to take a survey of the great metropolis, bid me observe how thick the City was set with

¹Spectator # 116, July 13, 1711

churches, and that there was scarce a single steeple on this side Temple-bar. 'A most heathenish sight!' says Sir Roger: 'there is no religion at this end of town. The fifty new churches will very much mend the prospect; but church-work is slow, church-work is slow.'¹

And a little later, upon his arrival at Spring-garden, we find revealed once again his love of nature as a background for sentimental, melancholy love-mooning, and, in sharp contrast, his distaste for anything verging on feminine vulgarity:

We had now arrived at Spring-garden, which is exquisitely pleasant at this time of year. When I considered the fragrancy of the walks and bowers, with the choir of birds that sung upon the trees and the loose tribe of people that walked under their shades, I could not but look upon the place as a kind of Mohamatan paradise. Sir Roger told me, it put him in mind of a little coppice by his house in the country, which his chaplain used to call an aviary of nightingales. 'You must understand', says the knight, 'that there is nothing in the world that pleases a man in love as much as your nightingale. Ah, Mr. Spectator, the many moonlight nights that I have walked by myself and thought on the widow by the music of the nightingale!' He here fetched a deep sigh, and was falling into a fit of musing, when a mask, who came behind him, gave him a gentle tap upon the shoulder, and asked him if he would drink a bottle of mead with her? But the knight, being startled at so unexpected familiarity, and displeased to be interrupted in his thoughts of the widow, told her she was a wanton baggage; and bid her go about her business....

As we were going out of the gardens, my old friend, thinking himself obliged, as a member of the Quorum, to animadvert upon the morals of the place, told the mistress of the house, who sat at the bar, that he should be a better customer to her garden, if there were more nightingales, and fewer strumpets.²

A distinctive item of setting is also used as the focal

¹ Spectator # 383, May 12, 1712

² Idem.

point of a story indicative of Sir Roger's kindly understanding of, and practical resourcefulness in dealing with, his tenants and ex-tenants:

When we were arrived upon the verge of his estate, we stopped at a little inn to rest ourselves and our horses. The man of the house had, it seems been formerly a servant in the knight's family; and to do honour to his old master, had some time since, unknown to Sir Roger, put him up in a sign-post before the door; so that the knight's head had hung out upon the road about a week before he himself knew anything of the matter. As soon as Sir Roger was acquainted with it, finding that his servant's indiscretion proceeded wholly from affection and good-will, he only told him that he made him too high a compliment; and when the fellow seemed to think that could hardly be, added with a more decisive look, that it was too great an honour for any man under a duke; but told him at the same time, that it might be altered with a very few touches, and that he himself would be at the charge of it. Accordingly they got a painter, by the knight's direction, to add a pair of whiskers to the face, and by a little aggravation of the features, to change it to a Saracen's Head. I should not have known this story, had not the inn-keeper, upon Sir Roger's alighting, told him in my hearing that his honour's head was brought back last night, with the alterations that he had ordered to be made in it. Upon this my friend, with his usual cheerfulness, related the particulars above-mentioned and ordered the head to be brought into the room.¹

It would be difficult to make a more resourceful use of a local color item distinctive of the period.

Finally, the Sir Roger De Coverley Papers offer one example of the use of the picture-gallery custom to motivate characterization, and two original extensions of the picture-gallery idea to include trophies and monuments, which are in their turn used to evoke details indicative of personality.

¹Spectator #122, July 20, 1711

As we have seen earlier in our discussion, Deloney and Head employed the picture-gallery custom, though Deloney was alone in hinting that it might be utilized to show character ideals and to motivate character changes; and we shall see later that Richardson and Fielding were to use the same custom, Richardson probably modeling his application of it on Addison and Steele's procedure.

The picture-gallery custom proper is used by Steele. He employs it as a means of bringing out some of Sir Roger's traits, having the knight comment on the pictures to the Spectator and by so doing reveal his own traits and ideals. For instance, in showing his visitor the ancestral portraits, Sir Roger expresses his admiration for the brave, courteous, and musical knight who was his grandfather; and makes clear his ideal of womanhood by praising his "excellent" grandmother, whose greatest claims to fame consisted in her having born ten children and in her having invented the best receipt for hasty-pudding and white pot. Later, he pauses before a portrait of a "soft gentleman" of "no justice but great good manners", whose greatest distinction was that he was the first to make love by squeezing the hand; our noble knight shows his distaste for smoothness disassociated from uprightness by indicating scornfully that this ancestor ran the estate heavily into debt. Other ideals of Sir Roger are brought out when, gazing intently and admiringly at a portrait of Sir Humphrey, he eulogizes that gentleman's punctuality, generosity, inno-

cence, and ability. And finally, when Sir Roger, obviously embarrassed, passes quickly by the portrait of the honest man of supposedly humble birth, who, though always disclaimed as kin by the De Coverleys, was "winked at" at a time when money was wanting and admitted to the family, we have revealed clearly to us the knight's pride in the aristocratic blood of his ancestors.¹

To Addison goes the credit for the two extensions of the picture-gallery idea which widen its applicability to the field of characterization. In the first of these he utilizes Westminster Abbey as his setting, and brings out some of Sir Roger's traits by relating the knight's comment. Some excerpts will illustrate his method:

As we went up the body of the church, the knight pointed at one of the trophies upon one of the new monuments, and cried out, 'A brave man, I warrant him!' Passing afterwards by Sir Cloudsley Shovel, he flung his hand that way, and cried 'Sir Cloudsley Shovel! a very gallant man!' As we stood before Busby's tomb, the knight uttered himself again after the same manner: 'Dr. Busby! A great man! he whipped my grandfather; a very great man! I should have gone to him myself, if I had not been a blockhead; a very great man!'

We were immediately conducted into a little chapel on the right hand. Sir Roger, planting himself at our historian's elbow, was very attentive....

Sir Roger, in the next place, laid his hand upon Edward the Third's sword, and leaning upon the pommel of it, gave us the whole history of the Black Prince; concluding, that, in Sir Richard Baker's opinion, Edward the Third was one of the greatest princes that ever sat upon the English throne....

Our conductor then pointed to that monument where there is the figure of one of our English kings without a head; and upon giving us to know that the head, which was of beaten silver, had been stolen away several years since, 'Some Whig, I'll warrant you', says Sir Roger; 'and you ought to lock up your kings better; they will carry off the body too, if you don't take care.'

¹Spectator # 109, July 5, 1711

The glorious names of Henry the Fifth and Queen Elizabeth gave the knight great opportunities of shining, and of doing justice to Sir Richard Baker, who, as our knight observed with some surprise, had a great many kings in him, whose monuments he had not seen in the Abbey.¹

By Sir Roger's comment on the various items of the setting we have had revealed to us his hero-worshiping patriotism, his acceptance of external rewards as sufficient signs of greatness, his rabid Toryism and his uncritical distrust of all Whigs, the limited scope of his reading and at the same time his pride in parading his learning, his tendency to ancestor worship, his habit of giving unasked-for advice in a somewhat patronizing fashion, and his occasional naivety. To do all this by implication in so short a passage is a great achievement, and is a brilliant demonstration of the use to which setting can be put in the field of characterization.

The last example of Addison's use of setting to be cited here centers around the trophies with which Sir Roger adorned certain parts of his house:

My friend Sir Roger has been an indefatigable man in business of this kind [physical exercise], and has hung several parts of his house with the trophies of his former labours. The walls of his great hall are covered with the horns of several kinds of deer that he has killed in the chace, which he thinks the most valuable furniture of his house, as they afford him frequent topics of discourse, and shew that he has not been idle. At the lower end of the hall is a large otter's skin stuffed with hay, which his mother ordered hung up in that manner, and the knight looks upon with great satisfaction, because it seems he was but nine years old when his dog killed him. A little room adjoining to the hall is a kind of arsenal filled with guns of several sizes and inventions, with which the

¹ Spectator #329, March 18, 1712

knight has made great havoc in the woods, and destroyed many thousands of pheasants, partridges, and woodcocks. His stable-doors are patched with noses that belong to the foxes of the knight's own hunting down. Sir Roger shewed me one of them that for distinction sake has a brass nail struck through it; which cost him about fifteen hours riding, carried him through half a dozen counties, killed him a brace of geldings, and lost about half of his dogs. This the knight looks upon as one of the greatest exploits of his life. The perverse widow whom I have given some account of was the death of several foxes; for Sir Roger has told me that in the course of his amours he patched the western door of his stable. Whenever the widow was cruel, the foxes were sure to pay for it. In proportion as his passion for the widow abated and old age came on, he left off fox hunting; but a hare is not yet safe that sits within ten miles of his house.¹

Here we have a vivid and distinctive setting which makes clear that Sir Roger enthusiastically shared the sporting notions of the English country squire; and at the same time furnishes significant local color.

Of the achievement of Addison and Steele we may say that they were the first important pioneers in the application of setting to the art of characterization: with great skill they demonstrated that the traits of a complex personality could be brought out by allowing a character to react to settings that were naturally a part of his own particular environment. This step was the more important in that it interrelated narrative, characterization, and essential local color, and fused them into one organic whole--something which no one had achieved before Addison and Steele with any great

¹Spectator #115, July 12, 1711

degree of success, and which forms part of the essential structure of modern novel technique. As a result of their method, they not only portrayed character vividly but also sketched the England of the country-squire with sufficient vividness to point the way to such rich local color as appeared later in The Vicar of Wakefield. Utilizing the customs of the time, and the distinctive backgrounds of both country and city life, and interrelating them with character and plot, they showed the way to a deeper and truer realism.

VIII

DANIEL DEFOE

The next important novelist to be considered as we trace the development of English realistic prose fictional setting is Daniel Defoe, who published his first novel in 1719 when he was nearly sixty years old.

Literary Technique and Background for Setting

When discussing his use of setting it is essential to keep clearly in mind his method of work and the conditions that gave rise to the invention of that method. As Baker has said: "The public for whom Defoe catered was more insistent even than the readers who believed in Mrs. Behn's and Mrs. Manley's reliability on being supplied with genuine information. Fiction was a thing they despised; they left it to the childish people who liked fairy tales. Defoe's predecessors flattered this superiority by seasoning their fiction with fact or the pretense of fact: Defoe dished up facts themselves to make fiction. In order to convince the readers that what he was telling them, however incredible it sounded, was indubitably true, Defoe invented a special technique, the circumstantial method, a technique that has been used since only when writers have had to secure suspension of disbelief in the absolutely impossible; and the

result was that he set an example of such realism as skirts the limits, if it does not trespass beyond them, of legitimate art.¹ Though it seems to me essential to qualify this statement by adding that the circumstantial method in the extreme Defoe form has been used by other writers only when they have had to secure the suspension of disbelief in what might otherwise have seemed absolutely impossible or when they were exponents of extreme naturalism, Baker has well indicated the historic background from which Defoe's method arose. It should be remembered, however, that while Defoe brought the method to perfection and in that sense invented it, Kirkman and Behn, as we have already seen, used a less extreme form of it, which they evolved, as Defoe probably did, from certain techniques employed by the travel-book writers. Now the circumstantial method consists of linking factual details one with another and so building up a continuous chain of verisimilitude; the joker in the method, from the standpoint of real truth, is that these details, though each one is a fact in itself, can be joined (as Swift proved for all time in Gulliver's Travels) in such a way as to make a whole which never was or could be in life as we know it--and yet the reader, impressed by the facts, will believe in the truth of the whole or at least temporarily suspend his disbelief. In his use of it, however, Defoe

¹E. A. Baker, History of the Novel, III:130-131, (London: W.F. & G. Witherby, 1929)

employed as his writing unit combinations of detail which others insisted they had found in life or which he himself had noted, though he occasionally added to such combinations colorful and useful travel-book details not to be found joined to them in actual life but which the average individual, unfamiliar with the geography and the flora and fauna of strange parts of the world, would not question; so he re-created actual places and also created such things as a tropical isle which is descriptively--if not geographically--fictional, and a descriptively fictional central Africa.

There are two possible sources for existing combinations of detail: the reports of investigators and one's own personal experience. Defoe's novels depend to a great extent on the former. The numerous travel-book sources, accounts of military campaigns, plague pamphlets and so forth which he used are clearly indicated by Baker, and discussed in some detail by both Dottin and Secord; and Secord has indicated to a considerable extent what Defoe drew from specific sources for specific novels, and how he went about utilizing those sources. It is not to our purpose here to review the work of these able investigators. But it is important to note that, as Secord has proved, Defoe, more often than inventing incidents to correspond to his travel-book information, "picked up his geographic information and the suggestions for his incidents side by side in the jour-

nals of actual travellers."¹ Baker's assertion that Defoe's originality was "due to the circumstances that he helped himself to other people's facts rather than their stories"² seems an overstatement, though we must not forget that while Defoe borrowed the suggestions for incidents, he did, on occasion, recreate and embellish them. It appears quite possible, however, that much of his failure to employ settings and events dramatically may have been partly the result of his working under pressure of financial need, and falling into the fateful habit of drawing details and suggestions from sources without sufficient attention to developing them by seizing on their dramatic implications. Of the fact that Defoe drew the bulk of his setting and the suggestions for its accompanying incident from travel-book sources, there is no room for question.

Much of the rest of his material he drew from his own experience. His knowledge of London and the English countryside was detailed and accurate as a result of his own career. From boyhood on he lived in London and roamed its streets. Between 1684 and 1688 he travelled most of the highways of England, and came to know them so well that he could discuss them in detail in his Tour of Great Britain

¹A.W. Secord, Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe, p.118 (Univ. of Illinois, Studies in Language and Literature Vol.IX, 1924)

²E. A. Baker, op.cit., III:167

and in his articles in The Review. In 1692 he escaped imprisonment for bankruptcy by taking refuge in the Mint where he obtained a first-hand knowledge of the debauchery of both petty and great swindlers, sneak-thieves, highwaymen, bankrupts, and widows trying to catch a new husband. In 1703 he was convicted of sedition and imprisoned for five months in Newgate where, though as a political prisoner he had no actual contact with them, he obtained a picture of the cynicism of highwaymen, pickpockets, and prostitutes. And in 1706 he journeyed to Edinburgh, and so formed a background for the Scottish scenes in his stories. The most surprising thing about this experience is that Defoe did not employ it to give more detailed settings to his works. Except for the notable first section in Colonel Jack, and an occasional distinctive touch in the other novels, he depends on accurate piling up of street and place names, being content to combine with these generic locales (a house, an inn) not marked by detailed or distinctive description; and on the atmosphere that can be created by the narration of the actions of characters.

The same thing is true of Defoe's first-hand knowledge of Europe. From 1680 to 1682 he travelled on the continent, part of the time in the company of a caravan of merchants, spending considerable time in the principal cities of Spain, several months in the south of France, a considerable period in the large commercial cities of Italy (which he reached by

crossing the Alps), some weeks in France (Caen, Paris, Aix-la-Chapelle), and a long time in Holland. He then returned to England never to leave it again. He seems, however, to have been impressed much more by the spectacular and by the utilitarian aspects of what he saw than by the beauties.

And while, as Dottin has shown,¹ his novels are colored by the opinions he formed of various nationalities, he makes practically no use of his continental experience in his settings: there is merely a mention of the "horrible Alps", of the plan of the Garden of the Tuileries, of Holland dyke defenses, and of one or two other such points. Dottin concludes: "The pure sky of Italy, the play of color in Spain, the exquisite courtesy of the French, the enchanting beauty of the women of Versailles....had no place in a heart that beat with emotion only at the sight of the delapidated steps that led down to the Thames; at the mysterious, dark mazes of the Bank section of the city; and at the smoky taverns where, in the half-light, seated at crippled tables before jugs of beer, the English business man made his important transactions."² It appears to me that Dottin is implying that Defoe was more romantically emotional in attitude than there is any ground for believing. However this may be, even London aroused in Defoe only once any passion for dis-

¹Paul Dottin, The Life and Strange and Surprizing Adventures of Daniel DeFoe, pp28-32 (np. Macaulay Co., 1929)

²Ibid., p.36

tinctive description of locale. And Baker is correct when he says that Defoe's lack of descriptive atmosphere in scenes known to him personally "is due partly to his limitation of the interest to one central figure....His social criticism is merely incidental and so is his picturing of the world at large. His eye is by no means all-embracing. Through the eyes of his characters, through their direct contact with their surroundings, we have glimpses which are vivid and authentic; and we must build up for ourselves a realistic panorama from the materials so vouchsafed."¹

Analysis of Specific Works

Robinson Crusoe

With these facts concerning Defoe's literary technique and background in mind, we proceed to a detailed analysis of his use of setting. As there is more setting in his novels than in those of all previous writers of realistic prose fiction taken together, so there is more setting in his first novel Robinson Crusoe than in any of his other works. One reason for this (beyond the fact that Defoe had before him untapped travel-book material) is that he was a man whose viewpoint was often confined to that of the utilitarian middle-class merchant whose interests centered in the materially practical. Though in all his novels the artist

¹E. A. Baker, op.cit., III:195-196

in Defoe concentrated on providing setting which would afford a background convincing in its verisimilitude, the utilitarian in him was enthralled by the prospect of setting-in-the-making. And in Robinson Crusoe especially, he could give this inclination full rein. Indeed, the very theme demands it; man's struggle for survival on an uninhabited island is inextricably tied up with his skill in making shelter and in providing and using devices for securing sustenance and protection. So Defoe was able, with artistic justification, to devote a great amount of space to the utilization of details of locale to produce man-made setting, and to the modification of the setting so produced in such a way as to protect man from forces hostile to him. Consequently, Crusoe's passion for building was given full scope, with the result that more than a third of the extended description of setting in Robinson Crusoe is devoted to buildings and fortifications in construction. Moreover, since the first step in such activity often entails the selection of a site, Defoe found it simple to work in details of the countryside. An excellent example of his technique is the following account of Crusoe's selection of a home-site and his fortification of it:

....I found a little Plain on the Side of a rising Hill, whose Front towards this little Plain, was steep as a House-side, so that nothing could come down upon me from the Top; on the Side of this Rock there was a hollow Place worn a little way in like the Entrance or Door of a Cave, but there was not really any Cave or Way into the Rock at all.

On the Flat of the Green just before this hollow Place, I resolv'd to pitch my Tent: This Plain was not above an Hundred Yards broad and about twice as long, and lay like

a green before my Door, and at the End of it descended irregularly every Way down into the Low-grounds by the Sea side. It was on the N.N.W. side of the Hill, so that I was shelter'd from the Heat every Day, till it came to a W. and by S. Sun or thereabouts, which in those Countries is near the Setting.

Before I set up my Tent, I drew a half Circle before the hollow Place, which took in about Ten Yards in its Semi-diameter from the Rock, and Twenty Yards in its diameter, from its Beginning and Ending.

In this half Circle I pitch'd two Rows of strong Stakes, driving them into the Ground till they stood very firm like Piles, the biggest End being out of the Ground about Five Foot and a Half and sharpen'd on the Top: The Two Rows did not stand above Six Inches from one another.

Then I took the Pieces of Cable which I had cut in the Ship, and I laid them in rows one upon another, within the Circle, between these two Rows of Stakes, up to the Top, placing other Stakes in the In-side, leaning against them, about two Foot and a half high, like a Spurr to a Post, and this Fence was so strong, that neither Man or Beast could get into it or over it. This cost me a great deal of Time and Labour, especially to cut the Piles in the Woods, bring them to the place, and drive them into the Earth.

The Entrance in to this Place I made to be not by a Door, but by a short Ladder to go over the Top, which Ladder, when I was in, I lifted over after me, and so I was completely fenc'd in, and fortify'd, as I thought, from all the World.¹

I have already described my Habitation, which was a Tent under the Side of a Rock, surrounded with a strong Pale of Posts and Cables, but I might now rather call it a Wall, for I raised a kind of Wall up against it of Turfs, about two Foot thick on the Out-side, and after some time, I think it was a Year and a Half, I raised Rafters from it leaning to the Rock, and thatch'd or cover'd it with Bows of Trees, and such things as I could get to keep out the Rain, which I found at some times of the Year very violent.²

Here we have minute detail, producing verisimilitude, and tied up inextricably with the theme and with the action.

¹Defoe's Writings, VII:66-67 (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., n.d.)

²Ibid., VII:76

Defoe uses the measurement technique of the travel-book writers (as already had been done by Head and Kirkman), giving points of compass, numerical distance, and so forth--but he adds significant details of the terraine and skillfully utilizes them to create a centre of operations. Some fifty pages later, he describes in detail the construction of a dry season refuge; and the miracle which nature wrought during his short absence from it:

....I built me a little kind of a Bower, and surrounded it at a Distance with a strong Fence, being a double Hedge, as high as I could reach, well stak'd, and fill'd between with Brushwood; and here I lay very secure, sometimes two or three Nights together always going over it with a Ladder as before....

[On my return to it some weeks later] The Circle or double Hedge that I had made, was not only firm and entire; but the Stakes which I had cut out of some Trees that grew thereabouts, were all shot out and grown with long Branches, as much as a Willow-Tree usually shoots the first Year after lopping its Head. I could not tell what Tree to call it, that these Stakes were cut from. I was surpriz'd and very well pleas'd, to see the young Trees grow; and I prun'd them, and led them up to grow as much alike as I could; and it is scarce credible how beautiful a Figure they grew into in Three Years; so that tho the Hedge made a Circle of about twenty five yards in Diameter, yet the Trees, for such I might now call them, soon cover'd it; and it was a complete Shade, sufficient to lodge under all the dry Season.¹

The discovery of this growing hedge principle provided a powerful impetus to Crusoe--and to Defoe; he describes how by it he made a "cover" for his sea-side residence (about seventy words);² walled in a goat pasture (about 100 words);³

¹Ibid., VII:120

²Ibid., VII:121

³Ibid., VII:176

and produced, after being alarmed twelve years later by footprints in the sand, a second fortification for his sea-side home (about 300 words).¹ Nor did Defoe let the device rest there. In the Farther Adventures he uses it again to describe how the Spaniards made that home inaccessible to others (50 words);² and how later they made the whole plantation invisible to those on the outside (about 300 words).³ Now all this is definitely allowed by the theme of Robinson Crusoe: but Defoe has carried his passion for illustrating the practicality of a device to such an extreme that the reader is wearied by its recurrence and finds his interest in the narrative momentarily deadened. Further building details are given in the description of Friday's quarters,⁴ and in a six hundred word description of the intricate basket-work houses woven by the Spaniards and the Indians;⁵ the latter passage, however, creates considerable interest as these "bee colony" dwellings are definitely a curiosity and are utilized in the action. Defoe's descriptive setting-in-the-making provides verisimilitude by its circumstantial detail, but often becomes tedious despite the fact that it springs directly from the theme; it is, however, well unified and is utilized as a set-

¹Ibid., VII:186-187

²Ibid., VIII:147

³Ibid., VIII:173-174

⁴Ibid., VII:242

⁵Ibid., VIII:218-220

ting for active defense manoeuvres at various points in the narrative.

Several times in Robinson Crusoe Defoe introduces extended descriptive settings which in no way further the plot or the characterization, not even to the extent of providing a background against which action may take place. He is, however, careful to include only such things as have a definite curiosity interest. By the time such material is introduced, in the latter part of the Farther Adventures, the book has lost the characteristics of a novel (in the modern technical sense of that word), and has become little more than a glorified travel-book¹, whose curiosities are held together by their being witnessed by a traveller. In the category of curiosities must be included the description of a cane-lodging on the China coast,² of the regularity of the Nanquin street plan,³ of the country-seat of a China merchant,⁴ of the China Wall⁵ (which Defoe notes chiefly because of its lack of practicality), of snow-covered Tobolski, capitol of Siberia,⁶ and of the House of China-Ware, which I quote as an example of this type of setting:

¹See Baker's comment. op.cit., III:170

²Defoe's Writings, IX:143

³Ibid., IX:151

⁴Ibid., IX:157

⁵Ibid., IX:165-166

⁶Ibid., IX:197

....it was a Timber-House, or a House built, as we call it in England, with Lath and Plaister, but all the Plaistering was really China Ware, that is to say, it was plaister'd with the Earth that makes China Ware.

The Outside, which the Sun shone hot upon, was glazed, and look'd very well, perfect white, and painted with blue Figures, as the large China Ware in England is painted, and hard, as if it had been burnt: As to the Inside, all the Walls, instead of Wainscot, were lined up with harden'd and painted Tiles, like the little square Tiles we call Galley-Tiles in England all made of the finest China, and the Figures exceeding fine indeed, with extraordinary Variety of Colours mix'd with Gold, many Tiles making but one Figure, but join'd so artificially, that the Mortar being made of the same Earth, that it was very hard to see where the Tiles met: The Floors of the Rooms were of the same Composition, and as hard as the earthen Floors we have in use in several Parts of England, especially Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, etc. as hard as stone and smooth but not burnt and painted, except some smaller Rooms, like Closets, which were all as it were paved with the same Tile; the Cielings, and in a word, all the plaistering Work in the whole House were of the same Earth; and after all, the Roof was covered with Tiles of the same, but of a deep shining black; they told me there were Fountains and Fish ponds in the Garden, all paved at the Bottom and Sides with the same, and fine Statues sit up in Rows on the Walks, entirely form'd of the Porcellain Earth, and burnt whole.¹

Most of the curiosities, it should be noticed, are included partly because of their utilitarian interest.

In the travel-book section of Robinson Crusoe, Defoe does, from time to time, introduce some slight narrative justification, as in his description of the camel market scene² and of the Tartar attack from which travellers defended themselves by bending tree limbs to fence themselves in.³ It seems, however, that the narrative interest here

¹ Ibid., IX:164-165

² Ibid., IX:171

³ Ibid., IX:214

is merely the result of Defoe's habit of lifting from his source both local color and any attached narrative. It is certainly apparent that Defoe's curiosities merely serve as padding for a novel already too long, that their inclusion was probably dictated by the need of gaining money rapidly.

The technique of introducing setting-in-the-making being only infrequently applicable to the average novel, and the custom of introducing curiosities for their own sakes being really a destroyer of the continued narrative-character development essential to the novel as a type, it remains to be seen what uses of setting Defoe made that are of more importance in the development of novel technique.

Considerable description of Crusoe's island is introduced by the simple expedient of having him follow the natural instinct of the discoverer to survey his domain and estimate its possibilities. Point of view is definitely established and maintained. From a "Hill not a Mile from" him, "which rose up very steep and high, and which seemed to overtop some other Hills, which lay as in a Ridge from it northward", Crusoe saw that he was "on an Island environ'd every way with the Sea, no Land to be seen, except some Rocks which lay a great way off, and two small Islands less than this, which lay about three Leagues to the West."¹ On the days close-following his arrival, he went on a trip of discovery, which he tells of

¹Ibid., VII:59

as follows:

I went up the Creek first, where, as I hinted, I brought my Rafts on Shore; I found after I come about two Miles up, that the Tide did not flow any higher, and that it was no more than a little Brook of running Water, and very fresh and good; but this being the dry Season, there was hardly any Water in some Parts of it, at least, not enough to run in any Stream so as it could be perceiv'd.

On the Bank of this Brook I found many pleasant Savana's or Meadows; plain, smooth, and cover'd with Grass; and on the rising Parts of them next to the higher Grounds, where the Water, as it might be supposed, never overflow'd I found a great deal of Tobacco, green, and growing to a great and very strong Stalk....

The next day, the 16th, I went up the same Way again, and....found the Brook, and the Savana's began to cease and the Country become more woody than before; in this part I found different Fruits, and particularly I found Mellons upon the Ground in Great Abundance, and Grapes upon the Trees; the Vines had spread indeed over the Trees, and the Clusters of Grapes were just now in their Prime, very ripe and rich....

At the End of this March I came to an Opening, where the Country seem'd to descend to the West, and a little Spring of fresh Water which issued out of the Side of the Hill by me, run the other Way, that is due East; and the Country appear'd so fresh, so green, so flourishing, everything being in constant Verdure or Flourish of Spring, that it looked like a planted Garden....

I saw here Abundance of Cocoa Trees, Orange, and Lemon, and Citron Trees; but all wild and very few bearing any Fruit, at least not then; However, the green Limes that I gathered, were not only pleasant to eat, but very wholesome, and very cool and refreshing.¹

This perfectly natural circumstantial survey makes clear the source of much of Crusoe's supplies during his stay on the island, and gives the reader a general picture of the terraine. On several other occasions, the same method is used to reveal the topography, and points of advantage and disadvantage of various other sections; the most detailed of these is the

¹Ibid., VII:114-115

description of the other side of the island.¹ It should be stated, however, that since such material is frequently introduced without any dramatic, narrative interest, the story loses in power, as simple curiosity cannot be sustained for long stretches.

One of the great weaknesses of Defoe as a writer is this frequent failure to capitalize on and to sustain inherent dramatic interest. Too often he speaks prosaically and with a deadly, practical matter-of-fact-ness about settings and events which have possibilities of intense drama. Lost in a large valley, surrounded by wood-covered hills, Crusoe merely remarks that the weather "prov'd hazy for three or four Days" so that he could not get direction from the sun--and prosaically adds nothing more than "I wandered about very uncomfortably".² In crossing the Pyrenean Mountains, he remarks on "the Mountains covered with Snow" and the consequent danger of being buried alive; of the "dreadful hills and precipices" which give way suddenly to a view "of the pleasant fruitful Provinces of Languedoc and Gascoign, all green and flourishing";³ and gives the following account of the danger from wolves:

We had one dangerous Place to pass, which our Guide told us, if there were any more Wolves in the Country, we should find them there; and this was in a small Plain,

¹ Ibid., VII:125-126

² Ibid., VII:127

³ Ibid., VIII:89

surrounded with Woods on every Side, and a long narrow Defile or Lane, which we were to pass to get through the wood, and then we should come to the Village where we were to lodge.

It was within half an Hour of Sun-set when we entered the first Wood; and a little after Sun-set, when we came in to the Plain. We met with nothing in the first Wood, except, that in a little Plain within the Wood, which was not above two Furlongs over, we saw five great Wolves cross the Road, full Speed one after another, as if they had been in chase of some Prey, and had it in View, they took no Notice of us, and were gone, and out of our Sight in a few Moments.¹

Suspense having been aroused, and setting carefully prepared, Defoe now proceeds to a rather flat narration of their own experience with wolves, mentions that their guide was hurt in defending them, and nonchalantly adds: "So we were oblig'd to take a new Guide there, and go to Thouhouse, where we found a warm Climate, a fruitful pleasant Country, and no Snow, no Wolves, or anything like them."² Despite all the opportunities here for a dramatic utilization of setting, Defoe is content with mere matter-of-fact observations; he points out the factors in the setting which condition the action, but fails to vitalize that action by giving it an emotional tone conductive to dramatic character reaction.

While this weakness is general in all Defoe's work (a fact which need not surprize us when we consider his somewhat matter-of-fact utilitarian nature, and his tendency at times to use, without any great modification or amplification,

¹ Ibid., VIII:96

² Ibid., VIII:101

tion, the narrative suggestions found coupled with setting in travel-books), he does use setting as a conditioning and motivating force in the narrative, and for that should be commended. Moreover, though he rarely makes the most of his material, his work is not entirely devoid of dramatic utilization of setting. In Robinson Crusoe storms blow up frequently on the island. These are occasionally described with sufficient emotional tone to be fairly effective, and sometimes they produce an emotional response that motivates the action. Two examples, in climactic order of effectiveness, can be given. In the first, Crusoe is depicted as digging a cellar-cave when "a Storm of Rain falling from a thick dark Cloud, a sudden Flash of Lightning happen'd, and after that a very great Clap of Thunder". His reaction he describes as follows: "A Thought....darter into my Mind as swift as the Lightning itself: O my Powder! My very Heart sunk within when I thought that at one Blast all my Powder might be destroyed." So abandoning his other work, he made many small bags, filled them with powder and hid them in divers places.¹ In the second, Crusoe's reaction to an earthquake and a storm is described. "On a sudden", he relates, "I found the Earth come crumbling down from the Roof of my Cave, and from the Edge of the Hill over my Head, and two of the Posts I had set up in the Cave crack'd in a most frightful Manner." Terrified, he escaped over the wall by the ladder, and stopped to survey

¹Ibid., VII:68

the scene. "I plainly saw", he continues, "it was a terrible Earthquake, for the Ground I stood on shook three Times at about eight Minutes Distance, with three such Shocks as would have overturn'd the strongest Building that could be suppos'd to have stood on the Earth, and the Great Piece of the Top of a Rock, which stood about half a Mile from me next the Sea, fell down with such a terrible Noise as I never heard in all my Life.* Sick to his stomach at the thought that he might have been buried alive, he sat down to compose himself. "While I sat thus", he adds, "I found the Air overcast, and grow cloudy, as if it would Rain; soon after that the Wind rose by little and little, so that, in less than half an Hour, it blew a most fearful Hurricane: The Sea was all of a Sudden cover'd with Foam and Froth, the Shore was cover'd with the Breach of the Water, the Trees were torn up by the Roots, and a terrible Storm it was; and this held about three Hours, and then began to abate, and in two more Hours it was stark calm, and began to rain very hard." "This violent Rain", he later explains, "forced me to a new Work, viz. To cut a Hole thro my new Fortification like a Sink to let the Water go out, which would else have drowned my Cave."¹ The description of the hurricane here is more than usually effective--made so partly by the concreteness of the detail, and partly by the suiting of the prose rhythm to the action

¹ Ibid., VII:91-93

and by the use of alliteration and of the onomatopoeic principle of employing harsh r sounds plus s sounds and alternation of long and short vowels--all employed to depict the violence of the storm. The whole description has a definite, progressive unity of emotional tone, and motivates the action, giving it a dramatic impetus.

The best example of dramatic utilization of land setting in Robinson Crusoe is in the story of Crusoe's cave discovery, given below in greatly deleted form:

While I was cutting down some Wood here, I perceiv'd that behind a very thick Branch of low Brushwood, or Underwood, there was a kind of hollow Place; I was curious to look into it, and getting with Difficulty into the Mouth of it, I found it was pretty large; that is to say, sufficient for me to stand upright in it, and perhaps another with me; but I must confess to you, I made more haste out than I did in, when looking farther into the Place, and which was perfectly dark, I saw two broad shining Eyes of some Creature, whether Devil or Man I knew not, which twinkl'd like two Stars, the dim Light from the Cave's Mouth shining directly in and making the Reflection....

I had not gone three Steps in, but I was almost as much frightened as I was before; for I heard a very loud Sigh, like that of a Man in some Pain, and it was follow'd by a broken Noise, as if of Words half express'd, and then a deep Sigh again: I stepped back, and was indeed struck with such a Surprize, that it put me into a cold Sweat; and if I had had a Hat on my Head, I will not answer for it, that my Hair might not have lifted it off....

I saw lying on the Ground a most monstrous frightful old He-goat, just making his Will, as we say, and gasping for Life, and dying indeed of meer old age.

Accordingly the next Day, I came provided with six large Candles of my own making; for I made very good Candles now of Goat's Tallow; and going into this low Place, I was oblig'd to creep upon all Fours, as I have said, almost ten Yards: which by the way, I thought was a Venture bold enough, considering that I knew not how far it might go, nor what was beyond it. When I was got through the Straight, I found the Roof rose higher up, I believe near twenty Foot; but never was such a glori-

ous Sight seen in the Island, I dare say, as it was, to look around the Sides and Roof of this Vault, or Cave; the Walls reflected 100 thousand Lights to me from my two Candles; what it was in the Rock, whether Diamonds, or any other precious Stones, or Gold, which I rather suppos'd it to be, I knew not.

The Place I was in, was a most delightful Cavity, or Grotto, of its kind, as could be expected, though perfectly dark; the Floor was dry and level, and had a sort of small loose Gravel upon it, so that there was no nauseous or venomous Creature to be seen, neither was there any damp or wet, on the Sides or Roof.¹

Here we have some sense of dramatic surprize heightened by a fairly apt creation of a suitable unified setting which has definite emotional tone. The scene also reveals Defoe's sense of appreciation for beauty touched with strangeness and intensified by fear. It is also to be noted that the cave continues to be utilized in the plot, for it serves as a secret refuge from maurauding savages.

At times, though not with outstanding success, he uses setting as a means of causing, or of revealing, conditions of mind and soul, as an influence in the formation of or revelation of character or personality. The spectacle of the remains of a cannibals' feast, for instance, causes Crusoe to become sick to his stomach and quite faint; so by physical symptoms as well as by words Defoe reveals Crusoe's religious and moral antipathy to cannibalism.² On another occasion Crusoe is overwhelmed with a sense of the benevolent providence of God, and brought back to hope and healthy outlook

¹Ibid., VII:205-207

²Ibid., VII:190-191

through purgation by fear induced by setting. In attempting to reach a certain part of the island easily, he "found a great Ledge of Rocks lye out above two Leagues into the Sea, some above Water, some under it; and beyond that, a Shoal of Sand, lying dry half a League more; so that I was oblig'd to go a great Way out to Sea to double the Point." What followed is best told in Crusoe's own words:

Having secur'd my Boat, I took my Gun, and went on Shore, climbing up upon a Hill, which seem'd to overlook that Point, where I saw the full Extent of it, and resolv'd to venture....

....no sooner was I come to the Point, when even I was not my Boat's Length from the Shore but I found myself in a great Depth of Water, and a Current like the Sluice of a Mill: It carry'd my Boat a long with it with such Violence, that all I could do, could not keep her so much as on the Edge of it; but I found it hurry'd me farther and farther out from the Eddy, which was on my left Hand.

And now I saw how easy it was for the Providence of God to make the most miserable Condition mankind could be in worse. Now I look'd back upon my desolate solitary Island, as the most pleasant Place in the World, and all the Happiness my Heart could wish for, was to be but there again. I stretch'd out my Hands to it with eager Wishes. Oh happy Desart, said I, I shall never see thee more. O miserable Creature, said I, whether am I going.¹

In another passage Defoe reveals the effect of setting on mood and outlook, and the change in that mood which can be wrought by the redirection of ones point of view:

Before, as I walk'd about, either on my Hunting, or for viewing the Country; the Anguish of my Soul at my Condition, would break out from me on a sudden, and my very Heart would die within me, to think of the Woods, the Mountains, the Desarts I was in; and how I was a Prisoner, lock'd up with the Eternal Bars and Bolts of

¹Ibid., VII:159-161

the Ocean, in an uninhabited Wilderness, without Redemption: In the midst of the greatest Composures of my Mind, this would break out upon me like a Storm, and make me wring my Hands, and weep like a Child: Sometimes it would take me in the middle of my Work, and I would immediately sit down & sigh, and look up on the Ground for an Hour or two together; and this was still worse for me; for I could burst out into Tears, or vent myself by Words, it would go off, and the Grief having exhausted itself would abate.

But now I began to exercise myself with new Thoughts; I daily read the Word of God, and apply'd all the Comforts of it to my present State.¹

Such reactions as this are characteristic of Defoe's mind; and man's temporary rejuvenation or reformation under the influence of terrifying setting is common to many of his novels, as will be shown.

Nothing has been said so far of Defoe's depiction and utilization of sea atmosphere. In Robinson Crusoe, and just as effectively elsewhere, sea setting is employed to further and to give emotional tone to the narrative, and to produce character reactions. The account of the shipwreck off Crusoe's island, for instance, is remarkably graphic. While the total scene, covering some six pages, is too long to quote, some of the descriptive passages most skillfully utilized in the narrative can be given:

The Ship struck upon a Sand....the Sea broke over her in such a manner, that we expected we should all have perish'd immediately, and we were immediately driven into our close quarters to shelter us from the very Foam and Spray of the Sea....

After we had row'd, or rather driven about a League and a Half, as we reckon'd it, a raging Wave, Mountain-like came rowling a-stern of us and....overset the boat

¹Ibid., VII:130

at once....

I saw the Sea come after me as high as a great Hill, and as furious as an Enemy which I had no Means or Strength to contend with....The Wave that came upon me again, buried me at once 20 or 30 Foot deep in its own Body; and I could feel myself carried with a mighty Force and Swiftness towards the Shore a very great Way....

The next run I took, I got to the main Land, where, to my great Comfort, I clamber'd up the Cliffs of the Shore, and sat me down upon the Grass, free from Danger, and quite out of reach of the Water....

I cast my Eyes to the stranded Vessel, when the Breach and Froth of the Sea being so big, I could hardly see it, it lay so far off, and considered, Lord! how was it possible I could get on Shore? ¹

The blending in of these and other descriptive touches, which heighten the narrative and create a definite, positive emotional tone, is brilliantly done, the fusion of narrative and description being so smooth that the six page incident unrolls rapidly without a break in the interest and with considerable color. While Defoe's description of the storm and wreck at Yarmouth² is less effective, that of Crusoe's reaction to his first sea squall is definitely worth attention:

I expected every Wave would have swallowed us up, and that every time the Ship fell down, as I thought, in the Trough or Hollow of the Sea, we should never rise more; and in this Agony of Mind, I made many Vows and Resolutions, that if it would please God here to spare my Life this one Voyage,....I would never set it into a Ship again while I liv'd....

These wise and sober Thoughts continued all the while the Storm continued, and indeed sometime after; but the next Day the Wind was abated and the Sea calmer, and I began to be a little inur'd to it: However, I was very grave for all that Day, being also a little Sea sick still; but towards Night the Weather clear'd up; the Wind was

¹Ibid., VII:52

²Ibid., VII:10-11

quite over, and a charming fine Evening follow'd; the Sun went down perfectly clear and rose so the next Morning; and having a little or no Wind and a smooth Sea, the Sun shining upon it, the Sight was, as I thought, the most delightful that I ever saw.¹

When to this clearing weather are added a friend and some punch, all Crusoe's good resolutions go 'by the board'. Here is clearly revealed the average man's response to a changing environment; the upheaval of a moment of terror frequently causes a momentary ruffling of our emotional or moral complacency, but the effect is rarely lasting. Other examples of the force of sea setting to influence mood and action will be noted in the discussion of Defoe's other works. It may well be observed here, however, that the sea-sickness and the momentary moral purgation through terror that are characteristic of many of Defoe's sea scenes are direct reflections of his own experience.

The rest of his important narrative fiction will now be taken up in chronological order. Where the techniques parallel those of Robinson Crusoe, that will be pointed out, and illustrative passages listed in the footnotes; extremely significant settings, particularly those revealing skill not so clearly manifested in Robinson Crusoe, will be both quoted and discussed.

The King of Pirates

The King of Pirates, published in December, 1719, is

¹Ibid., VII:7-8

one of the least interesting of Defoe's novels. Lacking any theme significant of the general experience of mankind, it merely recounts, in dry style, an itinerary of piracy without any particular dramatization of action, and without any character distinctly portrayed. Its setting is equally unnoteworthy; primarily non-descriptive, it utilizes the travel-book device of giving place names, dates, directions, latitude and longitude, and conditions of weather; this it carries to a greater extreme than in Robinson Crusoe--and, unlike Robinson Crusoe, with almost no descriptive support; for example:

....we set sail from the Island of St. Juan Ferriando the 23rd of September....and keeping the Coast of Chili on Board had good Weather for about a Fortnight (Octob. 14), till we came into the Latitude of 44 Degrees South; when finding the Wind come squally off the Shore from among the Mountains, we were obliged to keep farther out at Sea....; and some Calm we met with, till about the Middle of October (16.) when the Wind springing up at N.N.W. a pretty moderate Gale, we jogg'd S.E. and S.S.E. till we came into the Latitude of 55 Degrees, and the 16th of November, found ourselves in 59 Degrees, the Weather exceeding cold and severe....¹

Only two settings are of any significance to us--and these merely duplicate techniques used in Robinson Crusoe; the building of a fortification on the Island of Madagascar is described;² and a touch of local color, not utilized except to afford a stopping place for the King of Pirates, is added in the description of a curiosity, the Persian caravanseras.³

¹Ibid., II:229

²Ibid., II:233

³Ibid., II:286

The Memoirs of a Cavalier

The Memoirs of a Cavalier, published in May 1720, is Defoe's attempt at an historical novel. It possesses, as Dottin points out,¹ a fictional hero in the midst of circumstances and events that are close to actual fact. As its sub-title indicates, however, it is really little more than "a Military Journal of the Wars in Germany and the Wars in England from the Year 1632 to the Year 1648", recounting the campaigns of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden and of King Charles I of England, as observed and participated in by an English adventurer. Meticulous as elsewhere in his mention of place names and dates, Defoe, while giving with accuracy much detail of military tactics in the battles of Leipsick, Magdeburgh, Nuremberg, the River Leck, and of Keynton, Edge Hill, Newberry, Marston Moor, and Nasby, is content to describe settings only when military strategy depends on them. He excuses himself from describing the countries and the famous cities the Cavalier visits by saying: "I shall not trouble the Reader with a Journal of my Travels, nor with the Description of Places, which every Geographer can do better than I".² And he adds concerning Italy:

About the Middle of January I left Milan and came to Genoa, from thence by Sea to Leghorn, then to Naples, Rome and Venice, but saw Nothing in Italy that gave me

¹Paul Dottin, op.cit., p.213

²Defoe's Writings, VI:6

any Diversion....

'Twas pleasant indeed when I was at Rome to say here stood the Capitol, there the Colossus of Nero, here the Amphitheatre of Titus, there the Aquiduct of---here the Pantheon, and the like; but I never designed to write a Book, as much as was useful I kept in my Head; and for the rest, I left it to others.¹

However, to show his own disgust with Italian "bigotry, lust, and vice", he does have the Cavalier describe the luxurious apartment of "a common street whore" to show his distaste for luxurious looseness:

When I had Admittance into her Apartments, the Richness and Magnificence of them astonished me, the Cupboard or Cabinet of Plate, the Jewels, the Tapestry, and every Thing in Proportion, made me question whether I was not in the Chamber of some Lady of the best Quality.²

And has him explain that he was prevailed on, rather than tempted, to go there, and that he left after paying for not receiving pleasure. But, after this one scene he accounts for the lack of others by saying: "I took no Pleasure in filling my Memoirs of Italy with Remarks of Places or Things, All the Antiquities and valuable Remains of the Roman Nation are done better than I can pretend to by such People who make it more their Business; as for me I went to see, and not to write, and as little thought then of these Memoirs, as I ill furnished myself to write them."³ This is no doubt true of the fictional Cavalier and of Defoe as well; and it helps to explain how the latter came to make so little use of his for-

¹ Ibid., VI:30

² Ibid., VI:31

³ Ibid., VI:33

eign travel in writing descriptive settings for his novels.

In perfect keeping with the theme as stated in the sub-title, Defoe does what his military hero might be expected to do: describes, generally with brevity, those parts of the terraine that were of decisive military importance. In Part I, which deals with the campaign of Gustavus Adolphus, he says in telling of the ambush of the French army on the way to the relief of Cassal:

The Army had marched over a great Plain, with some Marshy Grounds on the Right, and the Po on the left.... At the End of this Plain was a long Wood, and a Lane or narrow Defile thro' the Middle of it.

He then goes on to utilize this meagre setting, relating how the French artillery, followed by a rear guard of Dragoons, was attacked, while in this defile and unable to turn, by the Duke of Savoy; and how the guard, trying to escape, at the end of this defile, into a wood "so exceeding bushy and thick at the Bottom there was no entering it", had to abandon their horses, many of which were killed.¹ The inherent drama of this incident, however, is spoiled by matter-of-fact narration. The same is true of his description of the Siege of Magdenburgh. Here Defoe seems intent on establishing a point of view:

I was on the other Side of the Elbe when this dreadful Piece of Butchery was done; the City of Magdenburgh had a Sconce or Fort over against it, called the Toll-House, which joined to the City by a very fine Bridge

¹ Ibid., VI:22,24

of Boats....

The City Wall did not run along the Side where the River was so great a Height, but we could plainly see the Market-Place and the several Streets which run down to the River...¹

But having established it, he turns a potentially dramatic scene flat, for instead of describing the colorful detail of a city plundered and set afire, he merely sums up the consequences in a matter-of-fact tone:

....of 25000, some said 30000 People, there was not a Soul to be seen alive, till the Flames drove those that were hid in Vaults and secret Places to seek Death in the Streets, rather than perish in the Fire; Of these miserable Creatures some were killed too by the furious Soldiers, but at least they saved the lives of such as came out of their Cellars and Holes, and so about 2000 poor desperate Creatures were left.²

The same lack of dramatic utilization is apparent in the description of the storming of the Castle of Marienburg. The setting is clearly indicated:

The Castle stood on a high Rock, and on the Steep of the Rock was a Bastion, which defended the only Passage up the Hill into the Castle.

But Defoe is content to simply observe that the Scots took the castle "after two Hours desperate Fight in the Midst of Fire and Smoke".³ And the setting for the Battle of Nördlingen is added merely as a postscript to explain the defeat:

....several Regiments having never charged, nor fired

¹Ibid., VI:46

²Ibid., VI:45

³Ibid., VI:76-77

a shot; for the Foot had so embarrassed themselves among the Lines and Works of the Enemy, and in the Vineyards and Mountains, that the Horse were rendered absolutely unserviceable.¹

A final point concerning the settings of Part I is that the Cavalier is brought to observe, merely as a curiosity, the fortification of Holland towns "where the very Bastions stand on bottomless Morasses, and yet are as firm as any in the World".² This affords another example of the influence on his work of Defoe's passion for purely utilitarian observation, showing how he carried over into his novels touches of foreign settings which struck him during his travels with their practicality, and ignored or forgot the detail of all outside that category.

Part II of the Memoirs of a Cavalier is also flat because of dry, undramatized narration. Despite the fact that Defoe was on home ground, the settings (with one exception) are quite as scanty as those of Part I, though there are, of course, a few phrases supposed to add verisimilitude: "great commons which they call Moors", "a little Brook fordable with Ease", "Sloughs and Holes", and so forth. Two inherently dramatic scenes, related with a deadening matter-of-fact-ness, are those of the battles of Hunting-ton and of Worcester. Of the first Defoe says:

(the enemy) posted themselves at the Foot of the Bridge

¹Ibid., VI:130

²Ibid., VI:132

and fortified the Pass....I confess, had they in time planted a good Force there, they might have put a full stop to our little Army; for the River is large and deep, the Country on the Left marshy, full of Drains and Ditches, and unfit for Horse. The Enemy had 200 Musketeers placed on the Bridge, their Barracade served them for a Breast-work on the Front, and the low Walls on the Bridge served to secure their Flanks: Two Bodies of their Foot were placed on the opposite Banks of the River, and a Reserve stood in the Highway on the Rear. They would certainly have beat us all off, had not a venturous Fellow, one of our Dragoons, thrown himself into the River, swum over, and in the Midst of a Shower of Musquet Bullets, cut the Rope which tied a great flat-bottom Boat, and brought her over.¹

And of the second:

....we halted within view of a Bridge leaving Space enough on our Front for about half the Number of their Forces to pass and draw up; and at the Bridge was posted about fifty Dragoons, with orders to retire as soon as the Enemy advanced, as if they had been afraid. On the Road of the Right was a Ditch, and a very high Bank behind, where we had placed 300 Dragoons, with Orders to lye flat on their Faces till the Enemy had passed the Bridge, and to let fly among them as soon as our Trumpets sounded a Charge.

....the Crowd was so great, to get back, that many pushed into the Water; and were rather smothered than drowned.²

By far the most detailed setting--and the only one with a convincing dominant tone that contributes to the narrative--is that of the forced march from Blackstone Edge to Stanhope, County Durham:

....the next night....we got Guides to lead us to Blackstone Edge, a Ridge of Mountains that part this side of Yorkshire from Lancashire.... [After sending a boy to tell the enemy we had gone up these mountains] we turned short at the Foot of the Hills, and through blind, un-trodden Paths, and with Difficulty enough by Noon the next Day had reached almost 25 Miles North near a Town

¹Ibid., VI:287-288

²Ibid., VI:170-171

called Clithero. Here we halted in the open Field... This part of the Country almost unpassable, and walled round with Hills was indifferent Quiet....I took to the Hills toward Yorkshire. Here we met with such unpassable Hills, vast Moors, Rocks and Stony Ways as lamed all our Horses and tired all our Men....I believe neither Men nor Horses ever passed in some Places where we went, and for 20 Hours we saw not a Town nor a House, excepting sometimes from the Top of the Mountains, at a vast Distance....At last after a terrible Fatigue, we began to see the Western Parts of Yorkshire, some few Villages, and the country at a Distance, looked a little like England, for I thought before it looked like old Brennus Hill which the Grisons called the Grandfather of the Alps...

Along the Edges of those Vast Mountains we past with the Help of our Guide till we came into the Forest of Swale....and kept on this slow March, till he brought us to Stanhope, in the County of Durham.¹

The narrative of this fatiguing trip contains about the best utilization of setting in the Memoirs; yet it is far from being colorful or really effective. It may be concluded, then, that in the Memoirs there is little of interest to the student of setting, beyond the utilization of bare, though generally accurate,² historical backgrounds; and that the novel suffers greatly from Defoe's failure to seize upon and embellish the inherent drama of historical combinations of setting and incident. There seems to me little ground for Baker's assertion that the book, "as a semi-historical narrative, cannot be surpassed for graphic and entralling realism".³

¹Ibid., VI:240-246 Extremely slight settings are given for the Battle of Cirencester (VI:197) and the Battle of Nasby (VI:276)

²E. A. Baker, The English Novel, III:181
³Idem.

Captain Singleton

Defoe's next novel, Captain Singleton, is, in the technical sense of the word, not a novel at all. To a very great extent, it is nothing more than a travel book held together by the presence of a hero and by the very infrequent dramatic use of a setting. There is no unifying theme; the only one worthy of consideration is that of man overcoming obstacles (as in Robinson Crusoe), but here there is no real stress on overcoming. The narrative thread is made up largely of variations on the "we marched and saw" motif: "we went forward to the North....and saw",¹ "we marched three Days full West....and found",² "at the End of Twenty Days Travel....we discovered",³ "when we were past this River....we saw"⁴ --and so on ad infinitum; it is merely a weak excuse for the introduction of descriptions culled from travel-books or invented by the author.

Consequently, while Captain Singleton contains more detailed setting than any Defoe novel with the exception of Robinson Crusoe, it is of only slight interest to anyone primarily interested in the utilization of setting in narrative fiction--and that largely in the form of a warning

¹ Defoe's Writings, V:39

² Ibid., V:145

³ Ibid., V:142

⁴ Ibid., V:126

against local colorism without a dominance of character or plot interest. It is really a parade of scenery. Much of the local color is, in itself, strong and of convincing verisimilitude,¹ with Defoe gaining reader interest by the inclusion of locales either terrible or exceptional. Practically all the scenes of major interest are those of the journey through "Africa, the most desolate, desert, and inhospitable Country in the World": the links of cataracts "in the manner of a cascade", mountain top views of "howling wildernesses" of scalding sand, surprisingly pleasant valleys beyond the desert, an elephant herd in the distance, and so forth. In illustration, two such scenes are given below:

All the Country on the Bank of the River was a high Land, no marshy swampy Ground in it, the Verdure good, and Abundance of Cattel feeding upon it, where-ever we went, or which way soever we look'd; there was not much Wood indeed, at least not near us, but further up we saw Oak, Cedar, and Pine Trees, some of which were very large.

The River was a fair open Channel about as broad as the Thames below Gravesend, and a strong Tide of Flood, which we found held us about 60 Miles, the Channel deep; nor did we find any Want of Water for a great Way.

We came to a great Water-fall or Cataract, enough to fright us, for I believe the whole Body of Water fell at once perpendicularly down a Precipice, above sixty Foot High, which made a Noise enough to deprive men of their Hearing, and we heard it above Ten Miles before

¹Detail is drawn largely from travel books of Mandelslo, Knox, Dampier, Mission, with the colorful African material from Ogilby's Description of Africa.

we came to it.¹

.....
On the tenth Day we came to another Cataract; for the Ridge of high Hills crossing the whole Channel of the River, the Water came tumbling down the Rocks from one Stage to another in a strange Manner: so that it was a continued Link of Cataracts from one to another, in the Manner of a Cascade; only, that the Falls were sometimes a Quarter of a Mile from one another, and the Noise confused and frightful.²

....we found the Sand so deep, and it scalded our Feet so much with the Heat, that after we had, as I may call it, waded rather than walk'd thro it about seven or eight Miles, we were all heartily tired and faint; even the very Negroes lay down and panted, like Creatures that had been pushed beyond their Strength.

.....
....But we had here no Shelter, no Lodging after so hard a March; for here were no Trees, no not a Shrub near us: And which was still more frightful, towards Night we began to hear the Wolves howl, the Lions bellow, and a great many wild Asses Braying, and other ugly Noises which we did not understand³

.....
The second Day in the Morning, before they had gone Half a Mile, looking behind them, they saw a vast Cloud of Sand or Dust rise in the Air, as we see sometimes in the Roads in Summer, when it is very dusty, and a large Drove of Cattel are coming, only very much greater; and they could easily perceive that it came after them, and that it came on faster than they went from it. The Cloud of Sand was so great, that they could not see what it was that raised it, and concluded, that it was some Army of Enemies that pursued them.... [really elephants]⁴

In all such scenes⁵ we have masses of convincing detail with unity and occasional depth of emotional tone, yet even within

¹Defoe's Writings, V:78-79

²Ibid., V:88

³Ibid., V:99

⁴Ibid., V:101

⁵See also further description of the "howling wilderness of sand" (V:96) the wilderness of blackish-deadcolored moss (V:137), they valley between mountain ridges (V:145)

such scenes there is much rather flat description of the terraine which spoils the effect as the reader must wade through it to get to such high points as those previously quoted. To get to such scenes, moreover, he is forced to read innumerable 'we marched and saw' phrases often followed by a quite detailed description of oft repeated features of landscape¹--material which might be of some interest to the close student of the history of geography, but not to the average reader of novels. Details of latitude, longitude, and so forth are also given in Captain Singleton as in other Defoe novels.

Despite its usual lack of any effective utilization of setting, Captain Singleton does afford a few scenes of some positive interest to the student of setting technique. Defoe makes one detailed use of setting-in-the-making (his description of the fortification of Point Desperation in Madagascar),² and twice uses geographical detail to explain predicaments encountered in the journey.³ Of greatest importance, however, are two scenes in which there is some definite dramatic utilization of setting, and a fairly vivid sea scene, which produces a general character reaction.

The first of the former is the description of the

¹ Examples too numerous to list. The pleasant Valley or Plain (V:98;113;217;142) barren spots (V:141;134;129), etc.

² Defoe's Writings, V:42

³ Ibid., V:44-45; 278-279

building of a rainy season shelter and the part it later played in repelling an attack by wild beasts:

Our Camp was like a little Town in which our Huts were in the Center, having one large one in the Center of them also, into which all our particular Lodgings opened....

[Around these huts] Stakes were not stuck in one by another like Poles, but in an irregular Manner; a great Multitude of them so placed, that they took up near two Yards of Thickness, some higher, some lower, all sharpened at the Top, and about a Foot asunder; so that had any Creature jumped at them, unless he had gone clean over, which it was very hard to do, he would be hung upon twenty or thirty Spikes.

The Entrance into this, had larger Stakes than the rest, placed so before one another, as to make three or four short Turnings, which no four-footed Beast bigger than a Dog could possibly come in at; we kept a great Fire very Night without the Entrance of our Palisade, having a Hutt for our two Centinels to stand in free from the Rain, just within the Entrance, and right against the Fire.

.....

It was one windy tempestuous Night after a very rainy Day, that we were indeed all call'd up; for such innumerable Numbers of Devilish Creatures came about us, that our Watch really thought they would attack us....The Moon was near the Full, but the Air full of flying Clouds, and a strange Hurricane of Wind to add to the Terror of the Night; when looking on the Back part of our Camp I thought I saw a Creature within our Fortification, and so indeed he was, except his Haunches; for he had taken a running Leap, I suppose, and with all his Might had thrown himself clear over our Palisadoes except one strong Pile which stood higher than the rest, and which had caught hold of him, and by his Weight he had hanged himself upon it....¹

This scene comes to a climax when, seeing wild animals "standing without as thick as a Drove of Bullocks going to a Fair", the campers fire into the darkness, and later find numerous wolves, leopards, and other animals dead outside the fortification. By far the best touch here is the intensification of

¹ Ibid., V:120-121; 123

the mood of terror and mystery by introduction of atmospheric and weather details. While it is a far cry from the skill of the modern novelist, it points the right direction. The way in which Defoe prepares the way for his bit of drama by a detailed description of the fortifications is also interesting. A large part of the possible dramatic effect, however, is unfortunately lost by matter-of-fact narration of the climax and the denouement.

The second scene of note is that of the attack on hollow-tree dwellers who inhabit an Indian Ocean isle.¹ Here a curiosity of building is introduced and fused with more than usual effectiveness in the narrative. While this ten page scene is too long to quote, whoever will take the trouble to read it will find that the action arouses interest and maintains suspense more than usual in Defoe's work. And he will note that setting is built up along with the action, without impeding that action or delaying it till the setting has been described in detail. At this stage in the development of the novel, this is a considerable accomplishment.

The sea scene is as follows:

We had a strong Gale of Wind at S.W. by W. and the Ship had fresh Way, but a great Sea rolling in upon us from the N.E. which we afterwards found was the Pouring in of the Great Oceans East of New Guiena. However, as I said, we stood away large, and made fresh way, when on a sudden, from a dark Cloud which hover'd over our

¹ Ibid., V:250-259

Heads, came a Flash or rather Blast of Lightning, and quiver'd so long among us, that not I only, but all our Men thought the Ship was on Fire. The Heat of the Flash of Fire was so sensibly felt in our Faces, that some of our Men had Blisters raised by it on their Skins, not immediately perhaps by the Heat, but by the poisonous noxious Particles which mix'd themselves with the Matter inflam'd. But this was not all; the Shock of the Air which the Fracture in the Clouds made, was such that our Ship shook as when a Broadside is fired, and her Motion being check'd as it were at once by a Repulse superior to the Force that gave her Way before, the Sails all flew back in a Moment, and the Ship lay, as we might truly say, Thunderstruck. As the Blast from the Clouds was so very near us it was but a few Moments after the Flash, that the terrible Clap of Thunder followed that was ever heard by Mortals. I firmly believe a Blast of a Hundred Thousand Barrels of Gunpowder could not have been greater to our Hearing; nay, indeed, to some of our Men it took away their Hearing.

.....

This was the first Time that I can say I began to feel the Effects of that Horrour which I know since much more of, upon the just Reflection on my former Life. I thought myself doom'd by Heaven to sink that Moment into eternal Destruction....¹

The detail is circumstantial, colorful, unified--well chosen to create a mood of terror and momentary contrition--and intensified by interesting comparisons. Obviously, however, while the effect on character is indicated, it is not done dramatically: there is no analysis and depiction of inner turmoil--only a commonplace observation that such a state existed.

In the novels which follow Captain Singleton setting is far less extensive than in those we have already discussed. There are several possible explanations for

¹ Ibid., V:235-237

this. The first and most probable is that since much of the action in these novels occurs in England, Defoe, realizing that English settings could not appeal successfully to the curiosity of his public, decided to rely largely on giving real place and street names, and allow the reader to fill in the English background from his own experience. Another related reason is that Defoe, not having a voluminous travel literature to draw on, lacked the desire to utilize his own knowledge of the local scene, feeling that the effort would not be justified by the interest gained. While these suppositions probably go a long way toward explaining the diminution in setting, they account only in part for his not developing French locales and not at all for his neglect of Virginian ones. This prompts the conjecture that Defoe may have come to feel, at least subconsciously, that detailed setting not organically involved in the plot and character development was a detriment to strong narrative fiction.

Moll Flanders

In Moll Flanders, published in 1721, there is less descriptive setting than in any other full-length Defoe novel. In the London section, he makes constant detailed and accurate use of linked street names, as exemplified by the following passage:

I went through into Bartholomew Close, and then turn'd round into another Passage that goes into Long-lane, so away into Charterhouse-Yard, and out into

St. John's-street; then crossing into Smithfield, went down Chuk-lane, and into Field-lane, to Holburn-bridge, when mixing with the Crowd of People usually passing there, it was not possible to have been found out; thus I made my second Sally into the World.¹

This device, as it is here, is often carried to a tiresome extreme. Descriptions, when they do occur, are exceedingly general, and as a rule lack color; about the most detailed is this extremely generic one for one of Moll's stealing ventures:

....there was a Shop in a certain Street which had a Warehouse behind it that look'd into another Street, the House making the Corner.

Through the Window of the Warehouse we saw lying on the Compter or Show-board which was just before it, five peices [sic] of Silks, besides other Stuffs; and tho' it was almost dark, yet the People being busy in the fore Shop had not time to shut up those Windows, or else had forgot it....so he [her colleague] ran rashly upon, slipt out a Square out of the Sash Window dexterously enough and got four Peices of the silks, and came with them towards me.²

Even in his use of Newgate, Defoe resorts to little place description, though reader-curiosity might easily have justified it in his mind. He calls Newgate "that dismal Place" and adds: "the hellish Noise, the Roaring, Swearing and Clamour, the Stench and Nastiness, and all the dreadful Afflicting things that I saw there; joyn'd to make the Place an Emblem of Hell itself, and a kind of Entrance into it."³ While he mentions a "little dirty Chamber"⁴ which Moll had to herself, the Condemned Hole,

¹Ibid., II:7

²Ibid., II:32

³Ibid., II:98

⁴Ibid., II:117

and the Press Yard,¹ he depends almost entirely for the creation of atmosphere on sound effects and action: "the Tolling of the great Bell of St. Sepulchre's....a dismal groaning and crying from the Condemned Hole"; and the "confused Clamour in the House" when, on the morning of an execution, some damned and cursed the condemned, a few prayed and some brutally huzza'd.²

In the American section, Defoe does reveal his careful study of geographical detail,³ but the descriptive element is really negligible. He relates, for instance, how Moll and her husband, after having lived a short time in Virginia, went across "the Bay, as they call it" to Maryland:

This was a long and unpleasant Voyage....we were full a hundred Miles up Potowmack River, in the part they call Westmorland County; and as that River is by far the greatest in Virginia, as I have heard say, it is the greatest River in the World that falls into another River, and not directly into the Sea; so we had base Weather in it, and were frequently in great Danger; for tho' they call it but a River, 'tis frequently so broad, that when we were in the Middle, we could not see Land on either Side for many Leagues together: Then we had the great Bay of Chesapeake to cross, which is where the River Potowmack falls into it, near thirty Miles broad.⁴

After a five day trip, they came to Philips Point, and having missed a ship for Carolina, settled "thirty Miles East... nearer the Mouth of the Bay". From this base, Moll later went

¹Ibid., II:123

²Ibid., II:118

³See E. A. Baker, op.cit., III:209

⁴Defoe's Writings, II:161

to see her son--"up another great River, on the East side of the River Potowmack, called Rapahannock River".¹ Of plantation scenes and the countryside, there is no description, the nearest to local color being the following touch concerning the York River plantation at the time when Moll revealed to her husband that she was also his sister:

One Evening as we were sitting and talking together under a little Awning, which serv'd as an Arbour at the Entrance into the Garden²

Journal of the Plague Year

The much praised Journal of the Plague Year, published in March 1722, has I believe, been greatly overestimated. I cannot see what justification Baker has for calling it "a first rate example of historical fiction" and "the last and finest of a number of powerful, imaginative descriptions of a crowded city stricken with plague."³ Defoe has really little more narrative thread than Dekker had in his plague pamphlets; and despite the fact that Defoe had at hand a much greater mass of source material, he falls far below Dekker in his description and creation of atmosphere, and even in his utilization of it. His basic device, as in Moll Flanders, is verisimilitude gained by piling up

¹ Ibid., II:163

² Ibid., II:103

³ E. A. Baker, op.cit., III:197,201

place names to which are added a few descriptive details:

Another Encounter I had in the open Day also: And this was in going thro' a narrow Passage from Petty-France into Bishopgate Church Yard, by a row of Almshouses; there are two Church Yards to Bishopgate Church or Parish; one we go over to pass from the Place call'd Petty-France into Bishopgate Street, coming out just by the Church Door, the other is on the side of the narrow Passage, where the Almshouses are on the left; and a Dwarf wall with a Palisadoe on it, on the right Hand; and the City Wall on the other side, more to the right.¹

He also mentions the shut-up houses, and the red crosses on the doors, and describes the appearance of comets before the fire and before the plague, as reported by witnesses in whom he places little credence. If we pass over a commonplace description of the boat-refuge at Greenwich² there are only three descriptions of any significance whatever. The first is of the Algate Pit:

....it was about 40 Foot in Length, and about 15 or 16 Foot broad; and at the time I first looked at it, about nine Foot deep; but it was said, they dug it near 20 Foot deep afterwards, in one Part of it, till they could go no deeper for the Water.³

Into this pit Defoe's observer watched bodies being dropped from a cart which was followed by a mourner who fainted at the dumping, recovered, and looked "into the Pit again as he went away, but the Buriers had covered the Bodies so immediately with throwing in Earth, that tho' there was Light enough, for there were Lanthersns and Candles in them, plac'd all Night round the Sides of the Pit, upon the Heaps of Earth,

¹Defoe's Writings, X:23

²Ibid., X:136

³Ibid., X:72

seven or eight, or perhaps more, yet nothing could be seen."¹
And that is all! What Dekker would have done with such a chance can be conjectured from material of his already quoted.

The second description of significance in the Journal is of one of the main streets of London in plague time:

I cannot omit taking Notice what a desolate Place the City was at that Time; The great Street I liv'd in, which is known to be one of the broadest of all the Streets of London....; all the Side where the Butchers lived, especially without the Bars was more like a green Field than a paved Street, and the People generally went in the middle with the Horses and Carts: It is true, that the farthest End toward White Chappel Church, was not all pav'd, but even the part that was pav'd was full of Grass also; but this need not seem strange since the great Streets within the City, such as Leaden-hall-street, Bishopgate-street, Cornhill and even the Exchange itself, had Grass growing in them, in several Places; neither Cart or Coach were seen in the Streets from Morning to Evening, except some Country Carts to bring Roots and Beans, or Pease, Hay and Straw, to the Market, and those but very few.²

This again is far below Dekker's standard; it has unity of impression, but it is wordy, lacks emotional color and striking detail, and merely serves a general local color purpose.

The third scene worth noting is a description of the flight of refugees from London. It is by far the most circumstantial, and has the best utilized setting. Defoe relates how three men, after passing through places whose names he meticulously gives, "came into the great North Road on the top of Stamford-Hill"

By this time they began to be weary, and so in the

¹Ibid., X:76

²Ibid., X:123

back Road from Hackey, a little before it opened into the said great Road....they set up their Tent, with the head of it against the Barn; this they did also because the Wind blew that Night very high, and they were but young at such a way of lodging.¹

They slept here, Defoe continues, but were awakened by a company of men and women; and after each group's fear that the other had the plague had been allayed, the new arrivals Lodged in the barn. Sentries set by the groups soon got acquainted, and the three received the following explanation of whence the others had come:

It seems, when they left Islington, they intended to have gone North away to Highgate, but were stopp'd at Holloway, and there they would not let them pass; so they cross'd over the Field and Hills to the Eastward, and came out at the Boarded-River, and so avoiding the Towns, they left Hornsey on the left Hand, and Newington on the right Hand, and came into the Great Road about Stamford-Hill on that side, as the three Travellers had done on the other side: And now they had thought of going over the River in the Marshes, and make forwards to Epping Forest, where they hoped they should get leave to rest.²

After hearing this account, Defoe continues, the three joined the larger company. When they reached Walthamstow, they were denied passage by the constables. They then fashioned muskets out of wood and wrapped them in cloth. This done, all but two or three of the men "sat under the Trees....in two or three Bodies, where they made Fires at a good Distance from one another."

While this was going on [John, the soldier] advanc'd himself and two or three with him, and set up their Tent

¹Ibid., X:158

²Ibid., X:162

in the Lane, within sight of the Barrier which the Town's men had made, and set a Centinel just by it with a real Gun....also he ty'd the Horse to a Gate in the Hedge just by, and got some dry Sticks together and kindled a Fire on the other Side of the Tent, so that the People of the Town cou'd see the Fire and the Smoak, but cou'd not see what they were doing at it.¹

By this ruse they made the constables think they were an army, threatened to quarter themselves on the town by force, and as a result were given passage and provisions for three days for twenty-six people. Later they encamped at Epping Forest:

....in the open Forest, not very near the High-way, but not far out of it on the North-side, under a little cluster of low Pollard-Trees: Here they pitched their little Camp, which consisted of three large Tents or Huts made of Poles, which their Carpenter and such as were his Assistants, cut down and fix'd in the Ground in a Circle, binding all the small Ends together at the Top, and thickening the Sides with Boughs of Trees and Bushes, so that they were compleatly close and warm. They had besides this, a little Tent where the Women lay by themselves, and a Hutt to put the Horse in.²

Here, after some protests, they finally got permission to stay, and were sent gifts by charitable people nearby:

, They were very thankful to-be-sure for this Relief, and particularly the Straw was a very great Comfort to them; for tho' the ingenious Carpenter had made Frames for them to lie in like Troughs, and fill'd them with Leaves of Trees, and such things as they could get, and had cut all their Tent-cloth out to make them Cover-lids, yet they lay damp, and hard, and unwholesome till this Straw came, which was to them like Feather-beds...

Encouraged by this good Usage, their Carpenter in a few Days, built them a large Shed or House with Rafters, and a Roof in Form, and an upper Floor in which they lodged warm, for the Weather began to be damp and cold in the Beginning of September; But this House being very well Thatch'd, and the Sides and Roof made very thick,

¹Ibid., X:165

²Ibid., X:171

kept out the Cold well enough; He also made an earthen Wall at one End, with a Chimney in it; and another of the Company, with a vast deal of Trouble and Pains, made a Funnel to the Chimney to carry out the Smoak.¹

Here, Defoe relates, they lived till the beginning of September, when, hearing reports of the plague in nearby towns, they decided to move; but by "the Marshes on the Side of Waltham" they met a barge-tender, who frightened them so by plague stories that they returned to Epping Forest. "It growing on toward Michaelmas, they found an old decay'd House" where they lived till December, when they returned to London.²

Now while this story reveals Defoe's accurate knowledge of English topography, it contains few descriptive details of the terraine, most of the setting being of the setting-in-the-making type and appealing to the curiosity of the reader. The narrative utilization, however, is better than usual. One is forced to the conclusion that in the much praised Journal, Defoe once again reveals a lack of interest in building up and utilizing distinctive, colorful English scenes; and is content to depend on place names, building and measurement details, and an occasional short descriptive phrase to produce a feeling of place reality.

Colonel Jack

In Colonel Jack, published in December 1722, the set-

¹Ibid., X:176

²Ibid., X:180-181

ting, though less extensive than in many of the earlier novels, is of considerable importance. It shows Defoe utilizing distinctive English scenes more effectively than anywhere else, and reveals him as an important forerunner of Dickens in his depiction of conditions of London slum life as revealed through the experiences of a typical street urchin who must exist by his wits alone. As one reads Colonel Jack, he cannot help feel that Defoe was vitally interested only in Jack's English adventuring (the narration of which occupies the first 125 pages), and that, a longer novel being popular, he merely filled the novel out by adding a section on Virginia and a long series of military exploits similar to those in the Memoirs of a Cavalier, though less ably narrated.

Defoe's depiction of London slum life, while not as detailed or colorful as that of Dickens, is a definite step in the direction of distinctive realistic setting blended organically with narrative action. The lodgings of street waifs are accurately described:

As for Lodging, we lay in the Summer-Time about the Watch-houses, and on Bulk-heads, and Shop-Doors, where we were known; as for a Bed we knew nothing what belonged to it for many Years after my Nurse died, and in Winter we got into the Ash-holes, and Nealing-Arches in the Glass-house, call'd Dallow's Glass-house in Rosemary-Lane or at another Glass-House in Ratcliff-Highway.¹

From these glass-house quarters, Defoe states, the waifs were occasionally routed in the middle of the night by a constable searching for a thief, and then allowed to return to their

¹Ibid., III:9

"warm Apartment among the Coal-ashes". It was to the "Dusty Quarters at the Glass-House" that Major Jack came, with his fellow pickpockets, to sit in a corner and share spoil "by the Light of the Glass-House Fire".¹ And there, after buying stockings and food with the money they had stolen, they slept "with an undisturbed Repose in the usual Place, surrounded with the Warmth of the Glass-House Fires above, which was a full Amends for all the Ashes and Cinders which we roll'd in below." "Those who know the Position of the Glass-houses", Defoe adds, "and the Arches where they Neal the Bottles after they are made, know that those places where the Ashes are cast, and where the poor boys lie, are Cavities in the Brick-Work, perfectly close, except at the Entrance, and consequently warm as the Dressing-room of a Bagnio."² From these headquarters Colonel Jack and his companions sallied forth to commit more and more serious crimes. In describing these adventures, Defoe reveals an accurate knowledge of the intricate details of London streets, and though he does continue to lean heavily on the device of linking street names, he adds brief descriptive touches sufficient to convince the reader that here we have real London scenes.³

¹Ibid., III:13

²Ibid., III:17

³In addition to the passages quoted, the interested reader should consult III:30, 32, 49 50-51, 53, 66, 67, 77, 105, 107, 112. Linked place names form the basis for these settings, but brief distinctive descriptive touches are added.

This may well be illustrated from the account of Colonel Jack's initiation into stealing from the Customs House:

As we went first to the Water-side, he led me into the Long Room at the Custom-house....

At length he comes over to me, and stooping as if he would take up a pin close to me [from the dust, as Colonel Jack had been doing] he put something into my Hand, and said, put that up, and follow me down Stairs quickly; He did not run, but shuffl'd along a pace thro' the Crowd, and went down not the Great Stairs which we came in at, but a little narrow Stair-case at the other End of the Long-Room....till thro' innumerable Passages, Alleys, and dark Ways, we were got up into Fenchurch-street, and thro' Billiter Lane into Leaden-hall-street, and from thence into Leaden-hall-Market.

It was not Meat-Market Day, so we had room to sit down upon one of the Butcher's Stalls.¹

Here they examined their stolen notes, decided on one they could cash with safety, and cashed it. Then they went "into Three-King-Court, on the other side of the Way,....cross'd back into Clement's-Lane, made the best of (their) Way to Cole-Harbour, at the Water-side, and got a Sculler for 1d." to carry them "over the Water to St. Mary Over's Stairs", where they landed. Then they went to St. George's Fields and shared the money, "sitting down in the Grass far enough out of the Path."²

The tense, emotional aftermath of this adventure Defoe depicts with great skill, utilizing details of London's outskirts in one of the most, if not the most, movingly dramatic of all his scenes: Fearful of having his money stolen, tor-

¹Defoe's Writings, III:22

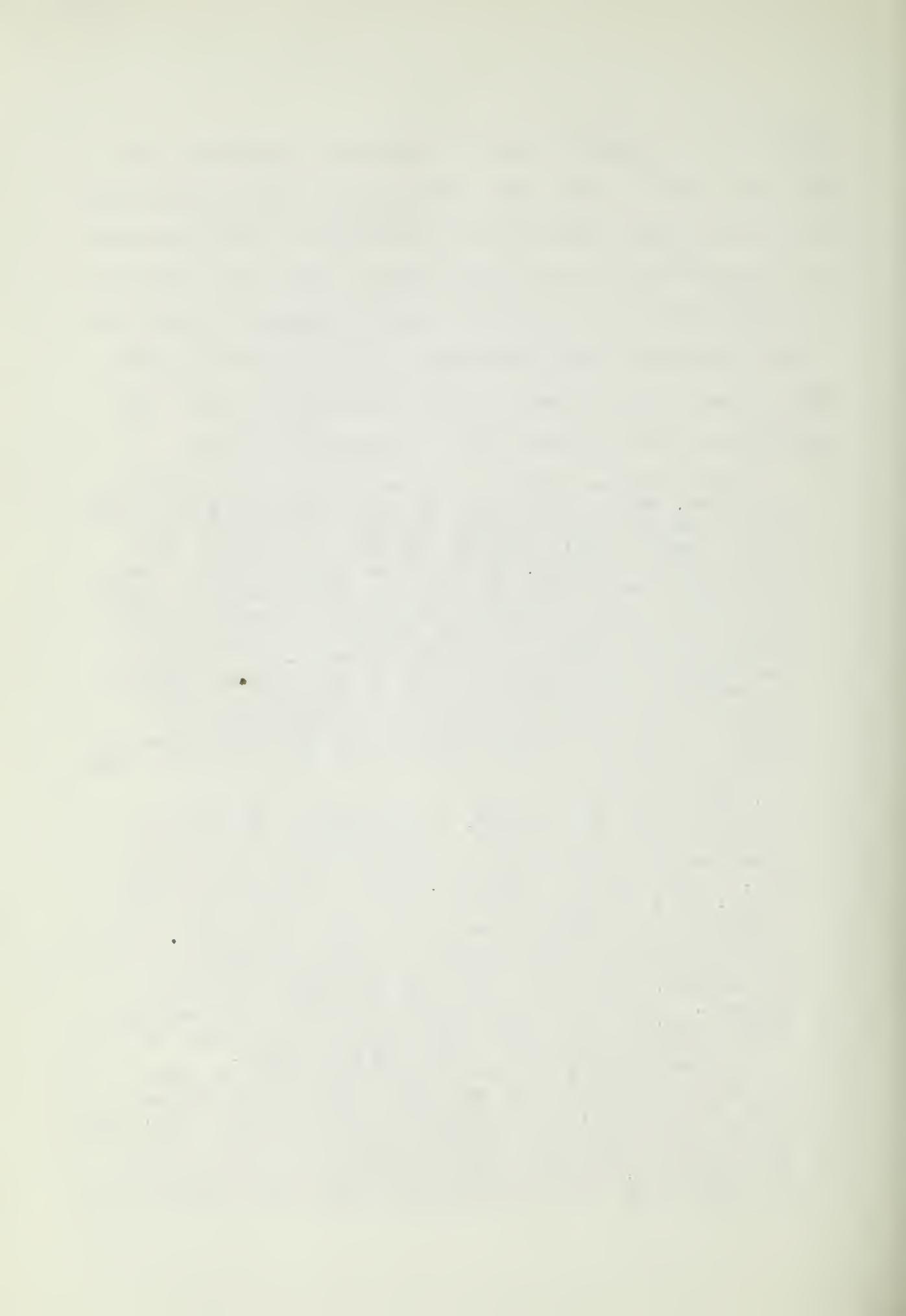
²Ibid., III:23

mented by the possibility of discovery by the police, Jack spent the night in the Glass-house, where, being pocketless, he held his money in his hand, and casting restless glances about him, waited out the fitful hours. Early next morning he rambled abroad in the fields toward Stepney, looking for a tree in which to hide his money; but there were no suitable trees, and there were too many people watching. The rest of the story is best told in Jack's own words:

This drove me further off, and I cross'd the Road at Mile-End, and in the middle of the Town went down a Lane that goes away to the Blind Beggars at Bednal-Green; when I came a little way in the Lane, I found a Foot Path over the Fields, and in those Fields several Trees for my Turn as I thought; at least one Tree had a little Hole in it, pretty high out of my reach, and I climb'd up the Tree to get it....and found(as I thought) a Place very fit, so I placed my Treasure there, but behold, putting my Hand in again to lay it more commodiously as I thought, of a sudden it slipp'd away from me, and I found the Tree was hollow, and my little Parcel was fallen in quite out of my reach....so there could be no Room, as much as to hope ever to see it again, for 'twas a great vast Tree.

....well, I thrust my Hand quite up to my Elbow, but no Bottom was to be found, or any End of the Hole or Cavity; I got a Stick off the Tree, and thrust it in a great Way, but all was one; then I cry'd, nay, roar'd out, I was in such a Passion, then I got down the Tree again, then up again, and thrust in my Hand again till I scratch'd my Arm and made it bleed, and cry'd all the while violently: Then I began to think I had not so much as a Half-penny of it left for a Half-penny Roll, as I was hungry, and then I cry'd again: Then I came away in Despair, crying and roaring like a little Boy that had been whipp'd, then I went back again to the Tree and up the Tree again, and this I did several times.

The last Time I had gotten up the Tree, I happen'd to come down not on the same Side that I went up and came down before, but on the other Side of the Tree, and on the other Side of the Bank also; and behold the Tree had a great open Space in the Side of it close to the Ground, as old hollow Trees often have; and looking into the open Place to my inexpressible joy, there lay my Money



and my linnen Bag, all wrapp'd up just as I had put it into the Hole: For the Tree being hollow all the Way up, there had been some Moss or light Stuff, (which I had not Judgement enough to know) was not firm, and had given Way when it came to drop out of my Hand, and so had slipp'd quite down at once.

I was but a Child, and I rejoic'd like a Child, for I hollow'd quite aloud when I saw it; then I run to it and snatch'd it up, hug'd and kiss'd the dirty Rag a hundred Times; then danc'd and jump'd about, run from one End of the Field to the other, and in short, I knew not what.¹

This is an excellent emotionalized use of setting--probably the best in Defoe; we must add, however, that it gains much of its power from biblical phraseology, rhythm, and sentence structure, to which Defoe, throughout his work is heavily indebted.² It is to be noted that he concludes the scene on a key of sheer realism: Jack sat down and cried for joy; then after rambling about in doubt as to what to do with the money, followed up a woman's suggestion by buying a pair of breeches so that he might have pockets for future use--and went over into the nearby churchyard to put them on.³

Two other settings may be given here as representative of Defoe's technique in the London section of Colonel Jack: the first the setting for the robbery of a goldsmith's shop, the second that for Jack's first participation in a gang

¹ Ibid., III:27-29

² In 1666 when it was rumored that the Papists were using their influence at court to have all printed Bibles burned, the boy Defoe worked diligently until he had copied out the whole of the Pentateuch in longhand.

³ Defoe's Writings, III:31

robbery:

The next Adventure was in the Dusk of the Evening in a Court, which goes out of Grace-Church-Street into Lombard-street, where the Quakers' Meeting House it.... it grew Dark, and the Goldsmith began to be shutting in Shop, and Candles to be lighted....at last he comes out of the Shop, with still a pretty large Bag under his Arm, and walks into the Court, which was then very Dark; in the Middle of the Court is a boarded Entry, and farther, at the End of it a Threshold, and as soon as he set his Foot over the Threshold, he was to turn on his Left-hand into Grace-Church-street. ¹

We met at the lower part of Greys-Inn-Lane about an Hour before Sun-set, and went into the Fields toward a Place call'd Pindar of Wakefield, where are abundance of Brick Kilns: Here it was agreed to spread from the Field Path to the Road Way, all the Way, towards Pan-crass-Church.²

Dottin has called the London section of Colonel Jack "perhaps the finest pages that Defoe ever wrote".³ And Baker has remarked concerning it: "No one was to depict the mean streets and the lower classes of the metropolis with such power and truth till the advent of Dickens."⁴ With these sentiments we may well agree; but despite Defoe's success, there seems no good reason for Dottin to add: "DeFoe's realistic picture of the life of a young London pick-pocket leaves Dickens' Oliver Twist far behind, though the latter book follows in regular sequence the literary precedent established by the earlier one."⁵ Certainly Dickens' com-

¹ Ibid., III:68

² Ibid., III:74

³ Paul Dottin, op.cit., p.221

⁴ E. A. Baker, op.cit., III:207

⁵ Paul Dottin, op.cit., p.222

mand of plot structure, characterization and setting is far superior to Defoe at his best.

In his account of Colonel Jack's and Captain Jack's trip to Scotland, Defoe reveals his intimate knowledge of English topography. Place names and occasional topographical details are given with accuracy with the result that the journey can easily be followed on a topographical map of the time.¹ A few specific details of the terraine are, furthermore, utilized in the narrative. For example, after stealing a horse at an inn and two white shirts drying "upon a Hedge near the Road", the Jacks got lost--and Defoe has the Captain explain the reason for their predicament:

....the particular Occasion that made me wander on was thus; the Country was all open Corn-fields, no Enclosures; when being upon a little rising Ground, I bad him stop the Horse....; when I was down and looked a little about me, I saw plainly the great white Road, which we should have gone, at near two miles from us.

Seeing pursuers galloping up the road, Captain Jack put "back the Horse behind a great white Thorn-Bush, which grew just by him", and so escaped being seen, for they were then on the top of a hill and might have easily been visible from the other road.² Despite an occasional such touch of local color, Defoe is generally content to depend on an accurate itinerary. That he did not use more descriptive setting in

¹See map, frontispiece of Defoe's Writings, III

²Defoe's Writings, III:106-107

his account can only be explained by his lack of interest in the 'impractical' beauties of the commonplace, and by his growing utilitarian attitude toward settings: for certainly in his Tour of England Defoe reveals that he had a critical knowledge of English highways and of points of interest to travellers.

The rest of Colonel Jack is a hodge-podge of travel and military campaigns. After his arrival in Scotland, Jack joined the Scotch army, deserted, and was transported to Virginia. Defoe gives place names and milages accurately for his Scotch scenes, but no descriptive touches; and the same is true for the Virginian scenes.¹ There follows a brief military interlude when Jack, attempting a return to London, is captured by a French privateer, escapes, and finally reaches Ghent, where he follows the fortunes of William of Orange for a while and then returns to London. The London episodes fail to bring the book back to life; and soon Defoe has his hero back in the army, fighting with the Irish, French and Spaniards against the Germans in the campaign of

¹Baker remarks (III:209) on Defoe's meticulous accuracy in topography of Virginia. It is interesting to note, however, that, having located Jack's plantation first in Virginia and then in Maryland, Defoe lazily explains his carelessness by adding: "for Maryland is Virginia, speaking of them at a Distance". (Defoe's Writings, III:182)

1701. Here again we are given a few brief, accurate military settings as in the Memoirs of a Cavalier¹. The rest of the book takes Captain Jack to Paris, Virginia, Havana, Vera Cruz, and so forth, but with no setting beyond place names.

The Fortunate Mistress

In Defoe's last important novel--The Fortunate Mistress, published in 1724--the tendency toward minimization of extended descriptive setting continues. In addition to the reasons for this given earlier in this discussion, it may be added that Defoe was now writing, much of the time, about a young woman who rose from poverty to attain to the courtesy of a noble title and to hob-nob on occasion with high society; he was consequently handicapped in providing much of the needed specific setting, for he had no first-hand knowledge of high society. What setting there is, however, is almost always utilized directly in the narrative. Her first husband deserting her and her children, Defoe has Roxana left in an unnamed country town, "in a Parlour, sitting on the Ground, with a great Heap of old Rags, Linen, and other Things"² about her, through which she was searching for things to pawn. "The House, that was before handsomely furnish'd with Pictures and Orna-

¹See Battle of Cremona (IV:28-29), details of unnamed battle (IV:34-36), Battle of Tessona Bridge (IV:40), Battle near Luzara (IV:44)

²Defoe's Writings, XI:15

ments, Cabinets, Pier-Glasses, and everything suitable was now stripp'd and naked, most of the Goods having been seized by the Landlord for Rent or sold to buy Necessaries.¹ When finally the landlord came in person to dun her for the rent, sympathy overwhelmed him as he "walk'd about the Garden, which was indeed all in disorder and overrun with Weeds";² so, struck by her beauty and poverty, he befriended her, and later cohabited with her. When, after the death of the landlord, Roxana has met His Highness, most of the settings which follow merely provide convenience for intrigue,³ though some few of them have details utilized dramatically. For example, Roxanna's Paris house had "a Way out into Three Streets, and not overlook'd by any Neighbors, so that he could pass and repass, without Observation; for one of the Back-ways open'd into a narrow dark Alley, which Alley was a Thorow-fare, or Passage, out of one Street into another."⁴ And in this house was a dressing room "which open'd with Folding-Doors into his Bed-Chamber",⁵--the folding doors being merely a device to allow Roxana to make a dramatic entry to him in a dazzling dress. Here also Defoe makes use of the mirror device, which we have several times seen employed before and shall see

¹Ibid., XI:16

²Ibid., XI:30

³See XI:218, 87

⁴Defoe's Writings XI:74

⁵Ibid., XI:80

employed again by Richardson and Fielding:

He stood up and, taking me by the Hand, led me to a large Looking-Glass, which made up the Pier in the Front of the Parlour; Look there, Madam, said he; Is it fit that Face, pointing to my Figure in the Glass, should go back to Poictou? No, Madam, says he, stay, and make some Gentleman of Quality happy.¹

Whereupon His Highness took her in his arms and kissed her. This is, fortunately, nearer than Defoe usually comes to sentimentality!

The only more detailed land settings in The Fortunate Mistress concern Roxana's apartments in London when, after her break with His Highness, she held soirees, and ran a gaming room to increase her already ample fortune. She speaks of her "Apartments in the Pall-mall, in a House, out of which was a private Door into the King's Garden, by the Permission of the Chief Gardener, who had lived in the House";² and in another place remarks:

I had a large Dining-Room in my Apartments, with five other rooms on the same Floor, all of which I made Drawing-Rooms for the Occasion, having all the Beds taken down for the Day; in three of these I had Tables plac'd, cover'd with Wine and Sweetmeats; the fourth had a green Table for Play, and the fifth was my own Room, where I sat, and where I received all the Company.³

This setting is utilized dramatically: Roxana kept her station in her receiving room, but with the folding doors wide open; later, after shutting these doors, she went upstairs

¹ Ibid., XI:66

² Ibid., XI:191

³ Ibid., XI:202

and put on a Mohametan costume, returned to her room where she gave a private audience to a noble (supposedly the King, incognito), and made a dramatic entry with him:

Immediately the Folding-Doors were flung open, and he led me into the Room. The Company were under the greatest Surprise imaginable.¹

Later the same evening, another noble brought in some women in Persian costume to dance for the assembly. To this scene Defoe tries to give a touch of authenticity by having the dancers sit "on a Safra, that is to say, almost cross-legg'd on a Couch made up of Cushions laid on the Ground".² These interior settings are obviously inadequate, and have no distinctive marks of authenticity; they cannot have carried, even to the lower middle class reader, any definite sense of verisimilitude; and the critical reader will find the touch about the beds a definite betrayal of Defoe's lack of knowledge of high society.

Elsewhere in the book Defoe inserts hints of local color based on his travels--but these are not concrete enough to be of much value. He speaks of a tour "into the Garden of the Thuilleries", where Roxana saw the King, and caught a glimpse of her first husband (now one of the Horse-Guards) as she walked "up the Broad Terrass, and, crossing the Hall, towards the Great-Stair-Case";³ mentions "those frightful

¹ Ibid., XI:204

² Ibid., XI:209

³ Ibid., XI:95-96

Mountains the Alps";¹ and names Italian cities, which are not described but which afford him an excuse for scornful comment on ecclesiastical Rome.²

The most effective setting in The Fortunate Mistress is a sea scene, one of the best in Defoe's works. As Roxana and her maid were on the way from France to Holland to cash funds and sell jewelry, a storm drove them toward England:

It was then [Roxana relates] about two Hours before Sun-set, and we were pass'd by Dunkirk and I think they said we were in sight of Ostend; but then the Wind grew high, and the Sea swell'd, and all Things look'd terrible, especially to us that understood nothing but just what we saw before us; in short, Night came on, and very dark it was, the Wind freshen'd and blew harder and harder, and about two Hours within night it blew a terrible Storm.it struck me with such Horrour, the darkness, the fierceness of the Wind, the dreadful height of the Waves, and the hurry the Dutch Sailors were in....the Ship giving a Jerk, by the Force, I suppose, of some violent Wave, it threw poor Amy quite down....andthe poor Girl struck her Head against the Bulk-head, as the Sea-men call it, of the Cabbin, and laid her as dead as a stone, upon the Floor, or Deck, that is to say she was so to all Appearance.³

"Setting her on the Deck, with her Back to the Board of the Bulk-head", Roxana revived her;--and Amy, crying out of the horrors of the damned, repented.⁴ Indeed, as the storm continued unabated, even Roxana "blushed" and decided to reform.⁵

¹Ibid., XI:116

²Ibid., XI:116ff

³Ibid., XI:142

⁴Ibid., XI:143-144

⁵Ibid., XI:146

The storm raged on:

It now began to be Day-light, for the Storm held all Night-long, and it was some Comfort to see the Light of another Day, which indeed, none us expected; but the Sea went Mountains high, and the Noise of the Water was as frightful to us, as the Sight of the Waves; nor was any Land to be seen; nor did the Seamen know whereabout they were.¹

Finally, however, the sailors spied land, and Amy tottered out on deck and back again to report: "There's the Land indeed to be seen; it looks like a Ridge of Clouds, and may be a Cloud, for aught I know." Roxana then looked, and observed: "The Land look'd like Clouds, and the Sea, went as high as Mountains so that no Hope appear'd in the seeing the Land."² Despite the horror of this experience, Roxana remarked, when at last they were safely ashore, that the incident did them no lasting good "for the Danger being over, the Fears of Death vanish'd with it; ay, our Fear of what was beyond Death also....Death-Bed Repentance, or Storm-Repentance, which is much the same, is seldom true."³ Yet Amy did refuse to ship for Holland, because of fear of retribution overtaking her on the sea; and Roxana had to go alone. The excerpts given do not convey the power of the scene; descriptive touches are skillfully worked in to provide both background and a partial cause of dramatic action and of character reaction. And Defoe reveals his recognition of

¹Ibid., XI:146-147

²Idem.

³Ibid., XI:148

the diversity of human nature by making a subtle distinction in the final reaction of the two women to their terrifying experience.

Conclusion

What then of Defoe's achievement in setting? Throughout his work he used the circumstantial method of linking facts of setting in an unbroken, logical chain. Often, by skillfully employing mere linked place names with only an occasional touch of distinctive descriptive detail, he succeeded in creating the illusion of reality. But he frequently linked colorful facts of descriptive setting, creating scenes with unity of impression and some emotional tone. Though he himself, especially in the novels before Moll Flanders, leaned toward the absolute in realism by choosing basic combinations of reported setting facts as he found them massed in the reports of actual travellers and then incorporating them in his novels, he developed an almost perfect method, not only of creating belief in real things made to serve the purpose of fiction, but also of creating a suspension of disbelief in what, described by any other method would seem impossible. This he passed on to Swift, and to poets and romancers everywhere who wished to make the unreal seem momentarily real. Furthermore, by his care in studying the geographical detail and, at times, the minute local color of the places he wished to depict, he pointed the way for the writers of historical novels and

historical romances. In Robinson Crusoe he showed how travel book materials could be utilized and successfully embellished to provide adequate local color verisimilitude, and how such details, in great numbers, could be fused organically with narrative and characterization. In the Memoirs of A Cavalier, and to a lesser extent in the latter part of Colonel Jack, he followed the precedent set by Nashe, and carried it through to greater authenticity by depicting the real settings of historical military actions. In the King of Pirates and to a greater extent in Captain Singleton, he unwittingly warned future novelists of the danger of even the most curious local color items if those items are simply joined by, rather than utilized in, the narrative thread. Perhaps subconsciously aware that he had carried local colorism to an unjustified extreme, he minimized his descriptive settings in Moll Flanders, Colonel Jack and The Fortunate Mistress, but carefully utilized those that he did employ, drawing much of his material from his own intimate knowledge of England. Moreover, in Colonel Jack, he showed himself the first major novelist to depict the distinctive settings of life in slum and waterfront districts. His technique, it is true, was not of the best as judged by modern standards; but he had no one to clearly show the way for him. He was handicapped by a London merchant's utilitarian mindedness, which made him often ignore backgrounds beautiful and impressive but not appealing immediately to man's instinct for preservation or advancement;

by a frequent dependence on and restriction to recorded fact for the material from which to produce fictional scenes; and either by a frequent lack of dramatic awareness, or by hurried writing which stressed quantity rather than quality, or by both. All things considered, it must be admitted that Defoe carried verisimilitude in setting farther than anyone till after the time of Fielding by accurate geographic detail, and distinctive, authentic local color; that he occasionally produced, in a few land scenes, and even more effectively in certain sea scenes, effective dramatic utilization of setting in narrative; and that he showed at least an awareness of a dynamic relation between setting and character moods and reactions. Viewed from a modern standpoint, his short-comings in technique bulk larger than his successes; but his successes show distinct advances in the mastery of the relation of setting to the novel as a whole.

IX

MRS. ELIZA ROWE

From 1729 to 1733, after the novels of Defoe and before Samuel Richardson had begun his career as a novelist, Mrs. Eliza Rowe published her Letters Moral And Entertaining. This work is really a collection of short stories in letter form, dealing with such subjects as the murder of a friend, a criminal passion, deserted love, or a brother's fatal passion for his sister. The stories, inherently dramatic, are purportedly realistic, for the author claims to draw moral instruction from life. The moral purpose, however, generally determines the incidents and their outcome, and the settings, more often than not, are of a conventional, pastoral-idyllic type which Mrs. Rowe evidently thought conducive to the prompting of outpourings of moral sensibility; these factors greatly lessen the seeming probability of most of the stories.

Occasionally, nevertheless, Mrs. Rowe, while always treading dangerously on the borderline of the conventionally romantic and idyllic, produces a story whose claim to reality is considerably reinforced by country setting which has at least a semblance of reality, or by convincing character reaction to setting.

In the following selection Lysander relates an experience of his:

I cannot forebear repeating to you an adventure which

I met a few days ago. As I was riding over some of my farms, I came to the brow of an extreme high hill, from whence I had the prospect of the most beautiful valley imaginable. It was full of woods, and watered with a large river: in some places it ran very broad and straight, in others it was more contrasted, and flowed in a thousand windings; sometimes it was lost among the woods, and rose again with fresh beauty, as it ran through the flowing lawns. I was so charmed with the sight of this sylvan scene, that I longed to be in it. But the difficulty was how to get down the hill, for that side next the valley was almost perpendicular, and so rocky and covered with wood, that it seemed impassable. However, I dismounted, and leading my horse, found a narrow winding, at the foot of which was a delightful plain, here and there interspersed with spreading oaks, beech and sycamore trees. Here I had the pleasure to observe the spring of the river that watered that beautiful valley. It gushes out of the side of the rock, and, after falling from one cleft to another, a great height, runs even with the grass through the plains and woods. I now got on horseback again, and, following the course of the river^{about three or four fur-}longs, I came to a low house, behind which was a plat of trees, and before a little court, which had no other fence than a laurel hedge, breast high. There was a little wicket which stood open....

His curiosity aroused, Lysander, so he relates, entered a neat hall, went up the staircase and peered into a room in which a woman of fifty was reading to two beautiful daughters. The older daughter looked up, and, thinking him a visitor for her mother, invited him in:

I now had time [he continues] to view the room they were in. It was hung, to the top of the chairs, with fine Indian matting, above which, all around the room, were shelves filled with books....There were, upon stands, several basons of flowers.¹

Sitting there, he heard how, at the death of her husband, the elder woman, burdened with debt and rejected by rich relations,

¹Letters Moral and Entertaining, I:138-140

had come there to live simply, with the result that after seven years she had been able to satisfy her creditors. This much of the story, at least, is quite realistic, though later Mrs. Rowe adds some rather romantic trimmings. The setting, somewhat idyllic to be sure, is fairly convincing and quite well fused into the narrative. In it, as elsewhere, Mrs. Rowe shows an appreciation of nature unusual for her time, an appreciation also manifested by her frequent mention of Thomson's Seasons and her occasional references to settings in the Sir Roger De Coverly Papers.¹

In another letter, in which a physician gives an account of his falling in love at first sight and of his being called in soon afterwards to attend the girl on her death-bed, the story begins as follows:

You will be surprised that the person who conversed in the Mall, the playhouse, and opera, with such indifference, should turn lover in the country....

The evening was fair, and with Mr. Thomson's excellent poem on Summer in my hand, I took a walk, and read by intervals, till my soul was composed and harmonious.

....I had wandered about a mile from the Earl of---'s gardens and park, till I entered a winding valley, green and flowery as the Elysian fields.

A sylvan stream ran murmuring along the middle, and willows in equal order adorned the banks. It was not perfect nature; something of art appeared, but in the most agreeable negligence. There were many little mossy seats raised along the sides of the river; but what pleased me most was a grotto, which looked like the retirement of some sylvan diety.²

Here the physician catches his first glimpse of the girl whom

¹See II - letter 15

²Ibid., I:97-98

he falls in love with only to see her next on her deathbed. The reaction of the main character to the country is one quite typical of Mrs. Rowe's stories. Her characters, most of them noble or of social prominence, are frequently moved emotionally when in the country they pretend at most times to scorn, and frequently their attitude changes: they undergo there experiences of 'sensibility' which pierce their shell of cynical urbanity--and sometimes they even show the extent of their change by dropping, in moments of sensibility, some of the poetic diction of the time and speaking of nature quite naturally, though it is not to be expected, of course, that they should lose all touches of affectation. Two instances of this follow.

In two letters Rosalina, "a damsel of quality", relates how she fled from her father's house in Paris when he forbid her any religious observance and tried to force her to marry against her will. She tells how, going to "one of the most fertile counties in England", she came to a large farmhouse, fronted by "a square court, surrounded by a hedge of hawthorne in full bloom"--and obtained a place as servant there. Her early descriptions of nature as she sees it there are filled with highly conventional poetic diction and idyllicism.¹ After acclimating herself, however, she writes a second letter in which she remarks that while she has read many descriptions

¹ Ibid., II:145ff

of dawn, she has previously been too polite to open her eyes "at such ungentle seasons" and then goes on to describe, with considerable naturalness, a country setting:

For a damsel of quality, I can work well enough with my needle; and as this is all my mistress will suffer me to do, I carry my work to some verdant retreat, of which here are great variety, in a large garden and wide range of orchard adjoining the house. I am delighted with old fashioned bowers, covered with woodbine and sweet-brier, and can sit as much at my ease on a bank of camomile shaded with laurel, as ever I did in a painted alcove. Maple trees and box, with bushes of roses, are placed about in a very agreeable disorder; the whole scene appears gay, but wild above rule or art

-While Nature here
Wantons as in her prime, and plays at will
Her virgin fancies. Milton.

The orchard joining to it is spacious and fair as Hesperian enclosures; violets, primroses and crocus, embroider the level green on which you tread: the trees are set in rows: their branches mingle above, and are now in their gaudy blossoms; the birds sit careless on the flowery sprays, and from their little throats pour a stream of harmony; while fragrant gales refresh the sense, and with their aromatic breath diffuse gladness to the soul.

Just at the bounds of this luxurious retreat stands an ancient oak; the extended boughs are a shelter from the mid-day sun, which perhaps your Ladyship would endure, rather than screen your beauty in such a rustic shade.... but I am now reconciled to nature in its greatest negligence, and, seated in this venerable recess, find virtue and liberty the principal springs of human happiness.¹

Though there are here conventional phrases, on the whole the scene is quite natural, and contains more minute particularization of a country scene than anything we have yet come across. The country is shown, moreover, to have influenced the girl's attitude toward life at least temporarily. But Mrs. Rowe is here realistic enough so that when the girl

¹ Ibid., III:225-227

falls in love with and marries a rich youth, she resumes some of her disdain for simplicity and reverts to artificial diction in describing that youth's estate, through which, she says, "a luxuriant river draws its shining train, and blesses the borders with immortal verdure."¹

Early in her "Six Letters from Laura to Aurelia", which deteriorates finally into an impossible Gothic moral romance in which the ghost of a hermit whom Laura loved and who scorned her, appears to warn her against vanity and irreligion, Mrs. Rowe gives a natural and delightful picture of a city girl's first reaction to the country and her change toward it when romance appears. Laura's first reaction is described as follows:

How I envy you the enjoyment of dust, of crowds, and noise, with all the polite hurry of the beau monde?

My brother brought me hither to see a country seat he has lately purchased. He would fain persuade me it is finely situated; but I should think it more finely situated in The Mall, or even in Cheapside, than here. Indeed, I hardly know where we are, only that it is a dreadful distance from the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, from the opera, from the masquerade, and everything in this world that is worth living for.

I can scarce tell you whither to direct your letters. We are certainly at the ends of the earth, on the borders of the continent, the limits of the habitable globe, under the polar star, among wild people and savages. I thought we never should have come to the end of our pilgrimage: nor could I forbear asking my brother, if we were to travel by dry land to the antipodes. Not a mile but seemed ten, that carried me from London, the centre of all my joys.

The country is my aversion; I hate trees and hedges,

¹ Ibid., III:229

steep hills and silent valleys. The satirist may laugh, but to me

Green fields, and shady groves and crystal springs
And larks and nightingales, are odious things.

I had rather hear London cries, with the rattle of the coaches, than sit listening to the melancholy murmur of purling brooks, or all the wild music of the woods. The smell of violets gives me the hysterics; fresh air murders me; my constitution is not robust enough to bear it; the cooling zephyrs will fan me into a catarrh, if I stay here much longer.

If these are the seats of the muses, let them unenvied enjoy their glittering whimsies, and converse with the visionary beings of their own forming. I have no fancy for dryads and fairies, nor the least prejudice to human society; a mere earthly beau, with an embroidered coat, suits my taste better than an aerial lover, with his shining tresses and rainbow wings.

The sober twilight, which has employed so many soft descriptions, is with me a very dull period; nor does the moon (on which the poets doat), with all her starry train, delight me half so much as an assembly room illuminated with wax-candles. This is what I should prefer to the glaring sun in his meridian splendour. Daylight makes me sick; it has something in it so common and vulgar, that it seems fitter for peasants to make hay in, or country lasses to spin by, than for use of people of distinction....

I find myself little at ease in this absence of the noisy diversions of the town. Death, that ghastly phantom, perpetually intrudes on my solitude, and, in some doleful knell from a neighboring steeple, often calls me to ruminate on coffins and funerals, graves and gloomy sepulchres. These dismal subjects put me in the vapours, and make me start at my own shadow; nor have I acquired any great degree of fortitude by turning free thinker.¹

This delightful, spirited reaction marks a new method in the utilization of country setting for characterization. By telling of her feelings, Laura not only gives a colorful impressionistic picture of the contrasting backgrounds of country and city life, but also reveals her mood and the extent to

¹ Ibid., III:286-288

which setting has contributed to that mood. Her reaction to setting sketches her background and vividly portrays her personality. After Mrs. Rowe, there is nothing quite in the same vein again until we have reached, at least, the time of Fanny Burney. It is quite an achievement in itself--but Mrs. Rowe does not stop there; continuing her story, she shows how a slight occurrence can change ones attitude toward his environment, how a change in mood may produce a new interpretation of ones surroundings. After the scornful, witty Laura has met her hermit, she writes as follows:

What mutable things we are! You will be surprized to hear I am grown fond of the country, and have acquired a relish for its harmless delights. I can talk to an echo, or listen with great attention to a purling stream....

As I was taking my constant diversion of riding on the downs, the evening being extremely pleasant, I wandered some miles beyond my usual limits, till I came in sight of a venerable pile of building, which could be distinguished from a church by nothing but the want of a steeple; everything about it had an air of grandeur and antiquity. At some distance from the house there was a thick wood, with several fine walks out through it.

I had a great inclination to ramble in those agreeable shades, and, alighting, ordered my footman to wait at the place where I left him. It was not long before I came to the center of the forest, in which was a large grass plat of a circular figure, with a double row of high elms growing in the same form round it. In the middle of the green was a little mount, which, by easy steps of turf, had a winding ascent to the top, where stood an arbour of jessamine, woodbine and roses, twisted together with a sort of elegant disorder. The gaudy blossoms pleased the sight, while their mingled sweets perfumed the ambient air. On the lower branches of the circling elms hung several gilt cages, with a variety of singing birds in them, which were now chanting their evening songs, while a musical flageolet, in clear and shrill responses, answered from the delicious arbour.

I began to think there were, indeed, such things as enchanted forests and vocal groves, or that the great Spirit

of Nature was solacing itself in those innocent abodes.¹ This is a fairly colorful description of the prepared retreat of a young hermit. The whole scene, moreover, shows the influence of setting in the formation of moods and attitudes. Unfortunately, however, from here on the story deteriorates rapidly into impossible romance, and the early atmosphere of realism contrasts so sharply with the romancing that the whole unity of the story is destroyed.

In the final scene which I wish to quote from Mrs. Rowe, she employs once again the device of having a character, fresh from an enthusiasm for one type of background, detail her impressions of another background, and in the course of so doing, bring out some of her characteristics. After Lavinia has viewed "the lofty roofs, painted staircase and gilded wainscot" of a duke's estate in London, she returns to her residence in the country and describes her new reaction to it:

The house used to appear a handsome ancient building, but now I find it only a Gothic heap of stone; the ceilings are so low that I am afraid of knocking my brains out; and the entry so narrow, that, if I should meet anybody, I should certainly run back again, for fear of being squeezed against the wall in endeavoring to pass. I went to pull down the venerable pictures of my ancestors, because they were not painted in Italy. The bow-windows terrify me and must be changed to Venitian ones; for there is no bearing the light which strikes through so unfashionable a piece of architecture.

Then, after mocking the country for its awkward girls and country bumpkin boys, she concludes:

I hope this delicacy will soon wear off, or I shall not be able to behave myself patiently among a set of people with whom I have formerly spent many happy hours.

¹ Ibid., III:293-294

I am sure the beau monde would approve me for being
unalterably yours, &c

Lavinia.¹

In this realistic burlesque of her own home, she not only gives us a rather good impression of it, but also reveals her own high spirits, her sharpness of wit, her moodiness, and the basic sanity of her outlook.

Mrs. Rowe can perhaps not be regarded as a major figure in the development of the use of realistic setting in the novel. Her work is too uneven, her realism too often marred by juxtaposition with impossible elements of romance and conventional idyllicism which she welcomed because they aided her in making the sentimental moral conclusions which she strove for. Nevertheless, she continued and developed in considerable detail the use Addison had shown could be made of rural setting for background and characterization. She utilized more minute detail of country locale, and showed a greater appreciation of nature and the extent to which it might be used in the novel, than any of her predecessors, or Richardson or Fielding. And her lively and life-like method of developing impressionistic setting and bringing out character mood and traits by having an individual detail her reactions to one locale when she is dominated by a mood created by a quite different locale, is, I believe, a significant contribution to setting technique.

¹ Ibid., II:156-158

X

RICHARDSONGeneral Attitude Toward Setting

As Augustine Birrell has remarked, Richardson was "terribly realistic".¹ That realism, however, was primarily one revelatory of the personality as it made itself known through hearts that reacted with 'sensibility' on the slightest pretense and poured themselves forth through the floodgates of expression at the height of their ever present distress. It was not basically a realism of externals. Consequently, it should not surprise us to note that in the twenty volumes of Richardson's three novels the space devoted to setting is relatively exceedingly small. His very method explains this. Not concerned primarily with plot and the action involved therein,² he was intent on having his characters display sensibility. And sensibility can be manifested almost anywhere, given some slight pretext--a fact which must have been brought home very early to Richardson by the sentimental drama of his time, one of the few acknowledged influences on his work. In practice, Richardson was generally content to use the 'stage property' technique, merely mentioning as locales for the outpouring of the heart, generic places: a dressing room, my lady's closet, a bed, a terrace, a landing place on

¹Augustine Birrell, "Richardson", in Res Judicatae, p.3
(N.Y.: Scribner, 1892)

²Dr. Johnson aptly remarked that he who reads Richardson for plot might as well hang himself.

the stairs, an armchair in the parlor. Indeed for hundreds of pages at a time no more detailed setting is given: in volume six of Clarissa, for instance, there is only one slightly more detailed locale. But it would be erroneous for anyone to assume from this that it is futile to look in Richardson's novels for important illustrations of the use of setting. He was one of the most important pioneers in its utilization. He could, and did at times, ably present brief scenes of dramatic action, localizing his narrative distinctively. Moreover, he used setting to elicit outpourings of sensibility; and he followed Addison, whom he had read with profit, by using settings, especially in his later work, to mirror character traits and to bring out reactions indicative of character. Nevertheless, there is evidence, as we shall see, that Richardson succumbed, perhaps at times against his better judgement, to the entreaties of his feminine admirers for hardly justifiable detailed descriptions of certain locales. The analysis now to be presented will reveal that after his writing of Pamela, he showed, as he gained more experience, a greater interest in the uses to which setting could be put, and consequently used descriptive touches more frequently in his two other novels.

Analysis of Specific Works

Pamela

Of Pamela, "that masterful objectification of unconscious

vulgarity",¹ Austin Dobson has remarked: "One of the notable characteristics of the book is its absence of landscape. The lonely house in Lincolnshire, with its carp-pond and its elms and pines, and the Bedfordshire mansion, with its canal and fountain and cascade, under the pen of a modern, would have been as pretty as a background by Mr. Marcus Stone. But Pamela has little description of any kind...."² Yet Pamela is not entirely devoid of setting. Its two main locales are Lord B's Bedfordshire and Lincolnshire estates. Of the Bedfordshire estate the reader must form a picture for himself from the author's mention time and time again of my lady's closet and dressing room, Mrs. Jervis' chamber with its closet and bed (scene of some of the most dramatic action) and her parlour, the library, the court yard, the little garden with its summer house (where Pamela's 'virtue' is so sorely tried), the gravel walk, and the terrace. We are told, to be sure, that Lord B was an unseen spectator of the "three bundles" incident, and to make this convincing Richardson tells us it occurred in the "green room" with its "closet, with a sash door and a curtain before it";³ he adds, moreover, that soon afterwards Lord B interviewed the palpitating Pamela in his library, a "noble apartment....full of rich pictures....and next the private

¹Joseph W. Krutch, "Richardson" in Five Masters, p.133 (N.Y.: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, 1930)

²Austin Dobson, Samuel Richardson, p.36 (London:Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1902)

³Pamela I:65 (Everyman's Library Edition, N.Y.: E. P. Dutton & Co.)

garden into which it has a door that opens".¹ The reader will have trouble putting this all together to form anything like a clear picture, though it must be admitted that the bare stage properties are used occasionally with dramatic effectiveness. And it is certainly true that the very recurrence of the locales makes them seem familiar, and creates for them a semblance of reality. Particularly is this so of the summer-house of the Bedfordshire estate. In it Pamela has resisted seduction before being taken to the Lincolnshire estate where her conduct turns Lord B's intentions to honorable ones; and in it on her return to Bedfordshire she manifests her sensibility. The latter incident she describes as follows:

This garden is much better cultivated than the Lincolnshire one, but that is larger and has nobler walks in it; and yet there is a pretty canal in this, and a fountain and cascade. We had a great deal of sweet conversation as we walked; and after we had taken a turn around, I bent toward the little garden; and coming near the summer house, took the opportunity to slip from him, and just whipt up the steps of this once frightful place, and kneeled down, and said, 'I bless thee, O God, for my escapes, and for thy mercies! O let me always possess a grateful, humble heart!! I went down again, joined him; and he hardly missed me.²

At other times in his works Richardson uses the same technique: he employs a locale previously mentioned many times, adds a slight descriptive touch to it, gives it an emotional tone of its own by having it call into memory the scenes that have occurred there in the past, and utilizes the memories

¹ Ibid., I:70

² Ibid., I:435

it evokes to produce in one of his characters an emotional reaction in which traits of character, or at least 'sensibilities' are revealed.

The Lincolnshire estate is described more effectively. The mood for Pamela's supposedly harrowing experiences there is effectively set when Richardson has Pamela give her first impressions of it:

About eight at night we entered the court yard of this handsome, large, old, and lonely mansion, that looks made for solitude and mischief, as I thought, by its appearance, with all its brown nodding horrors of lofty elms and pines about it.¹

The Gothic graveyard touch is here ably employed to call up a sense of foreboding. Pamela's trials in Lincolnshire, though dramatically portrayed, are however, generally given only 'stage property' settings: scenes of sensibility take place on the elm walk, in the pasture, by the iron gate that fronts the elms, at the bottom of a long row of elms on the steps of a broad stile, in a little alcove on the farthest side of the garden, by the mossy bank of the pond, near the sunflower in the garden, by the tiles near the pond, and by Pamela's bedside. But it is only in the account of Pamela's attempted escape that some of these locales are utilized in the narrative in such a way as to provide a fairly complete and unified setting for dramatic incident. Her plan for

¹Ibid., I:94

escape Pamela outlines as follows:

The poor cook maid has had a bad mischance; for she has been hurt much by the bull in the pasture, by the side of the garden, not far from the back door. This pasture I am to cross, which is about half a mile, and then is a common, and near that a private horse road, where I hope to find an opportunity for escaping.¹

.....

If I can then but get out between the two bars of the window (for you know I am very slender), then I can drop upon the leads underneath, which are little more than my height, and which leads are over a little summer parlor, that jets out toward the garden; as I am light I can easily drop from them; for they are not high from the ground; then I shall be in the garden; and as I have the key of the back-door, I shall get out.²

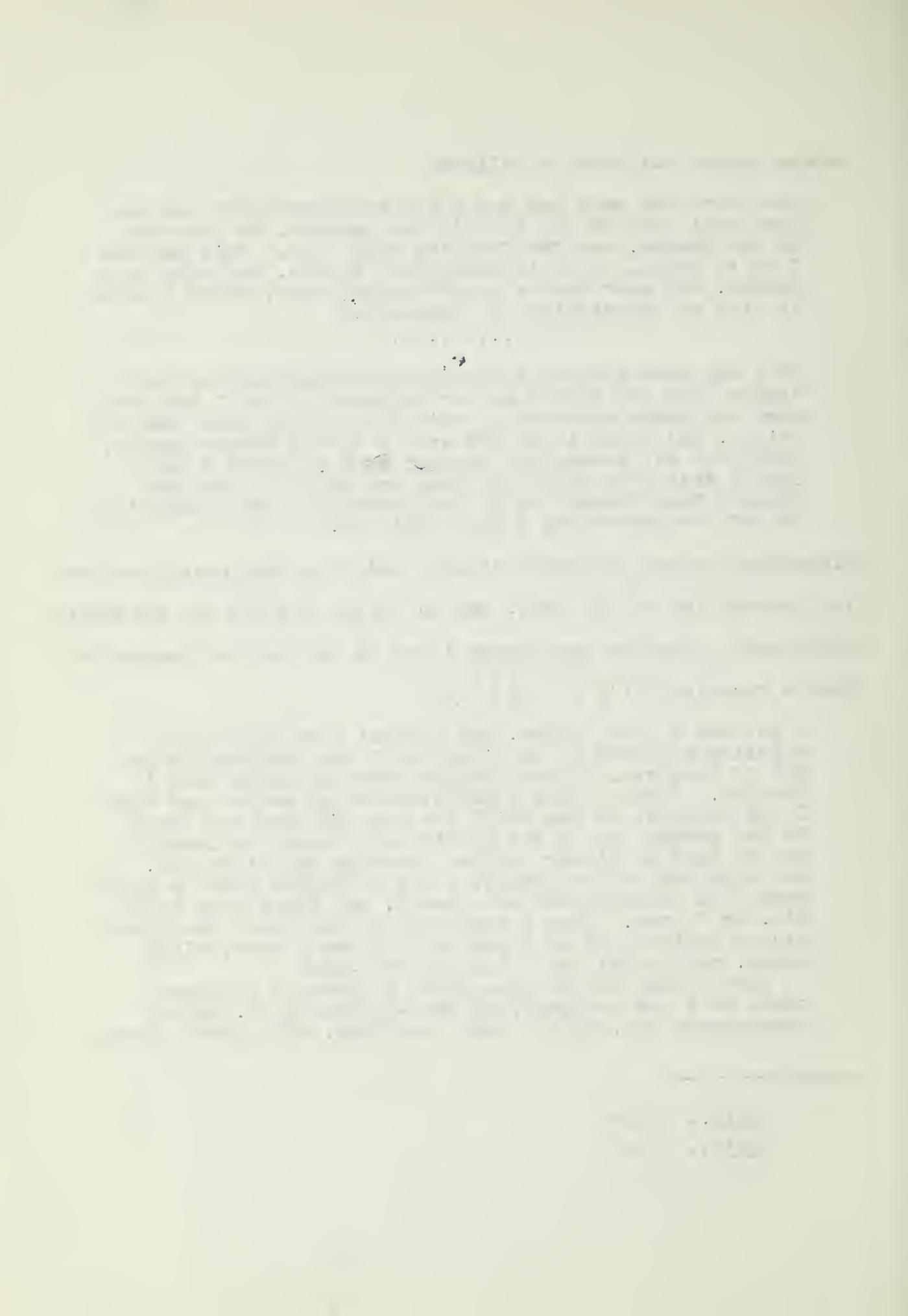
Richardson having indicated clearly and with convincing realism the general lay of the land, and so having created the necessary background, proceeds some pages later to narrate the escape as Pamela recalled it:

I got out of the window, not without some difficulty, sticking a little at my hips; but I was resolved to get out if possible. It was farther from the leads than I thought. I was afraid I had sprained my ankle; and when I had dropped, it was still farther off from the leads to the ground: but I did pretty well there; at least I got no hurt to hinder me from pursuing my intentions. So being now on the ground, I hid my papers under a rose bush, and covered them with mould, and there they still lie, as I hope. Then I went away to the pond: the clock struck twelve just as I got out; it was a dark, misty night, very cold; but I felt it not then.

When I came to the pond-side, I flung in my upper coat, as I had designed, my neck-handkerchief, and a round-eared cap, with a knot; and then, with great speed,

¹Ibid., I:125

²Ibid., I:150



ran to the door, and took the key out of my pocket, my heart beating all the time against my bosom, as if it would have forced its way through it. I found that I was most miserably disappointed; for the wicked woman had taken off that lock, and put on another; so that my key would not open it. I tried in vain, and feeling about, I found a padlock, besides on another part of the door. O then how my heart sunk! I dropt down with grief and confusion, unable to stir or support myself, for a while. But my fears awakened my resolution, and knowing that my attempt would be as terrible for me as any other danger I could then encounter, I clambered up upon the ledges of the door, and upon the lock, which was a great wooden one, and reached the top of the door with my hands; but, alas for me! nothing but ill luck! no escape for poor Pamela! - The wall being old, the bricks I held gave way just as I was taking a spring to get up; down came I, and received such a blow upon my head, with one of the bricks, that it quite stunned me; I broke my shins and ankle besides, and beat off the heel of one of my shoes.¹

Pamela goes on to relate that after creeping in search of a ladder and finding it gone, she limped to the edge of the pond, intending to throw herself in, and sat down on the sloping bank and began to ponder her wretched condition. Resolutions of suicide were soon followed by submission to divine will. "I arose", she continues,

but was so stiff with my hurts, so cold with the moist dews of the night, as also with the damps arising from so large a piece of water, that with great pain I got from the pond, which now I think of with horror; and bending my limping steps toward the house, took refuge in the corner of an outhouse, where wood and coals were laid up for family use till I should be found by my cruel keepers, and consigned to a more wretched confinement, and worse usage, than I had hitherto experienced! And there behind a pile of fire-wood I crept, and lay down, as you may imagine, with a mind just broken, and a heart

¹ Ibid., I:151-152

sensible to nothing but the extremest woe and dejection.¹ This is the best use of setting in a highly emotional narrative that we have seen. Its emotional tone is stronger than that of Defoe's account of hiding stolen money; and its detail convinces the reader of its probability, Richardson using a modification of Defoe's circumstantial method in his linking of minute detail. Facts of weather and time are carefully worked in to intensify the narrative; and obstacles furnished by the setting are minutely detailed and used to elicit a satisfactory emotional response from the victim. We have here then an extremely good utilization of convincing setting in a narrative which moves rapidly.

There is in Pamela Part I only one other setting worth noting; it affords merely a background for the reconciliation of Lord B and Parson Williams:

There is a turning in the road, about five miles off, round a meadow, that has a pleasant foot-way, by a little brook, and a double row of limes on each side, where, now and then, the gentry in the neighborhood walk, and angle and divert themselves.²

The detail here is ample and rather distinctive.

In the five hundred odd pages of Pamela II, which recount her life after marriage, there are only three settings that are of a descriptive type. The first of these is of no

¹Ibid., I:155-156

²Ibid., I:256

significant narrative importance, but it probably shows the beginnings of Addisonian influence in that by it Richardson makes a definite, though somewhat unskillful attempt, to reflect traits of Lord B's new character and to elicit remarks from him characteristic of his personality. Pamela, writing to her mother and father concerning her husband's gift of a house to them, says to them that Lord B

....proposes to fit up a large parlour, and three apartments in the commodious dwelling he calls yours, for his entertainment and mine when I pay my duty to you both for a few happy days....

The old bow-windows he will have preserved, but will not have them sashed, nor the woodbines, jessamines, and vines that run up against them, destroyed; only he will have large panes of glass to let in the sweet air and light and make amends for that obstructed by the shades of those fragrant climbers. For he has mentioned three or four times how gratefully they dispensed their intermingled odours to us, when, the last evening, we stood at the window, to hear the responsive songs of two warbling nightingales....

The parlour will indeed be more elegant; though that is to be rather plain than rich, as well in its wainscot as furniture, and to be new-floored.... The Parlour doors are to have brass-hinges and locks, and to shut as close as a watch-case. 'For who knows,' he says, 'but we shall have still added blessings, in two or three charming boys and girls....'

The beds he will have of cloth, as he thinks the situation a little cold, especially when the wind is easterly, and purposes to be down in the early spring season, now and then, as well in the latter autumn; and the window curtains of the same, in one room red, in the other green; but plain lest you should be afraid to use them occasionally. The carpets for them will be sent with the other furniture; for he will not alter the old oaken floors of the bed chamber, nor the little room he intends for my use....¹

¹ Ibid., II:1-2

Every day we rode out, or walked a little about the grounds; and while we were there he employed hands to cut a vista through a coppice, as they call it, or rather a little wood, to a rising ground, which fronting an old fashioned balcony, in the middle of the house, he ordered it to be planted like a grove, and a pretty alcove to be erected on its summit, of which he has sent them a draught, drawn by his own hand. ¹

The setting reveals, of course, Lord B's magnanimity, foresight, consideration, sensibility to beauty and 'touching' moments, and inadvertently, a trace of selfishness. It seems likely to me that the description originated in the insistence of Richardson's feminine admirers on a detailed picture of B's gift; and that Richardson, unable to resist their demands, determined to turn such a description to the best use possible under the circumstances.

The two other settings in Part II seem to be introduced solely for local color. They give a fairly convincing picture of Pamela's first impressions of London: and its surroundings:

....we found a stately, well-ordered and convenient house: but although it is not far from the fields, and has an airy opening to the back part, and its front to a square, as it is called, yet I am not reconciled to it, as entirely as to the beloved mansion we left. ²

.....

Mr. B has carried me about, by gentle turns; out of his workmen's way, ten miles round this overgrown capitol, and through the principal of its numerous streets. The villages that lie spangled about this vast circumference,

¹ Ibid., II:37

² Ibid., II:228

as well on the other side the noble Thames as on the Middlesex side, are beautiful, both by buildings and situation, beyond what I had imagined, and several of them seem larger than many of our country towns of note.¹

Clarissa

Into Clarissa, his next novel, Richardson "crammed the emotions appropriate to bourgeois existence with a minuteness never before known, and he did for the middle class heart what Defoe had done for the externals of everyday life."² But this was not his entire achievement. Writing of the type of life with which he was most familiar, Richardson, it is true depended for the most part of his nine volumes on the bare 'stage-property' type of setting, being generally content to mention a bed-chamber, a closet, a study, a poultry yard, or a landing on the stairs at Harlowe Place, Mrs. Sinclair's, Mrs. Moore's, or Mrs. Smith's; though more frequently than in Pamela he makes passing mention of specific actual locales such as Knightsbridge, Picadilly, Covent Garden, St. Dunstan's Church or Fleet Street, and several times links such names to afford an accurate itinerary as in the following passage:

The coach carried us to Hampstead, to Highgate, to Muswell Hill; back to Hampstead to the Upper-Flask: there, in compliment to the nymphs, my beloved consented to alight, and take a little repast. Then home early by Kentish-town.³

¹Ibid., II:229

²J. W. Krutch, op.cit., p.156

³Clarissa V:1 Letter 1 See also VII:65 and VIII:105-106
(Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1902)

At times, however, he was not content with such meagre setting. As Brian Downs has said¹ (without citing any evidence) Richardson gave us a more complete and veracious account than any of his predecessors of the milieu, the material background of the lives of the comfortable upper middle-class; though I would question his addition of the phrase "than any conscious litterateur before 1800", and would remind the reader that Richardson was the first to attempt any extended account of upper middle class life. In depicting the environs of Harlowe Place he builds up our impression by slow degrees, having certain of the letter writers describe various parts of it in relating their versions of the incidents about which the story centers; and since the same general locale is used again and again, we eventually come to believe in its actuality, for, as the narrative unfolds, the added descriptive touches are in perfect agreement with what has gone before. To illustrate this, it will be necessary to give the descriptive passages in the order in which they occur. In Vol. I, letter 9, Clarissa relates as follows her scheme for establishing a private correspondence with Miss Howe:

You must remember the Green Lane, as we call it, that runs by the side of the wood-house and poultry yard where I keep my bantams, pheasants, and pea-hens, which generally engage my notice twice a day....

¹Brian W. Downs, Richardson p.147 (London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1928

The land is lower than the floor of the wood-house; and in the side of the wood-house, the boards are rotted away down to the floor for half an ell together in several places. Hannah can step into the lane and make a mark with chalk where a letter or parcel may be pushed in, under some sticks....¹

In Vol. I, letter 35,² Lovelace describes his spy system and mentions the "rambling Dutch-taste garden" with its door leading into the haunted coppice. In letter 36,³ Clarissa tells now, in her first secret interview with Lovelace, he appeared suddenly from behind a stack of wood near the aforementioned woodhouse, and remarks: "had I not caught hold of a prop which supported the old roof, I should have sunk." The juxtaposition of poultry-yard and garden is indicated by Clarissa in Vol. II, letter 9:⁴

Going down to my poultry yard just now, I heard my brother and sister and that Solmes laughing and triumphing together. The high yew hedge between us, which divides the yard from the garden, hindered them from seeing me.

In letter 17,⁵ the "garden door leading into the coppice" is proposed as the meeting place for Clarissa and Lovelace at their next interview; and in letter 18,⁶ Clarissa recounts a

¹ Clarissa, I:54

² Ibid., I:247

³ Ibid., I:249-250

⁴ Ibid., II:48

⁵ Ibid., II:112

⁶ Ibid., II:115

letter from Lovelace in which he complains that he waited in vain throughout a rainy day and night, lurking in the gardens, by the coppice door, with no shelter but the "great overgrown ivy, which spreads wildly round the heads of two or three oaklings; and that was soon wet through."

"You remember the spot", Clarissa adds to Miss Harlowe, "you and I, my dear, once thought ourselves obliged to the natural shade which those ivy covered oaklings afforded us, in a sultry day." In the same letter,¹ Clarissa tells of arranging a future meeting with Lovelace "by the ivy summer-house, or in it, or near the great cascade, at the bottom of the garden". (This garden summer-house, which Richardson was so fond of using, was very likely suggested to him by, and perhaps modeled on, his historical grotto at North House, where he used to write and to read his output to his admirers) And in letter 20,² Lovelace writes Clarissa concerning her failure to meet him, and superscribing it "Ivy Cavern, in the coppice--day just breaking", continues:

On one knee, kneeling with the other, I write!--My feet benumbed with mid-night wanderings through the heaviest dews that ever fell: my wig and linen dripping with the hoar-frost dissolving on them!--Day but just breaking--Sun not risen to exhale--May it never rise again!--Unless it bring healing and comfort to a benighted soul....Gloomy is my soul; and all nature around me partakes of my gloom!

(Notice that the romantic touches are in perfect accord with Lovelace's machinations to work on Clarissa's sensibility.)

¹Ibid., II:118

²Ibid., II:133-134

In letter 29,¹ the traitor Joseph Leman is mentioned as having been seen in the poultry yard, where he "spoke to Robin over the bank which divided that from the green lane."² Letter 36² relates how Clarissa strolled in the "filbert walk" from which, when she saw her sister appear, she "struck into an oblique path."³ And in letter 38,³ Clarissa plans as follows for her escape with Ann Howe:

They [clothes for traveling] must be thrust into the wood-house; where I can put them on; and then slide down from the bank, that separates the wood-yard from the green lane.

The ivy summer-house is mentioned again in letter 42⁴ as the place where Clarissa will meet Lovelace if she decides to escape to the protection of his women-folk; and Richardson, probably prompted by his feminine admirers, adds the following in a foot note:

The Ivy Summer-house (or Ivy Bower, as it is sometimes called in the family) was a place, that from a girl, this young lady delighted in. She used, in the summer months frequently to sit and work, and read, and write, and draw, and (when permitted) to breakfast, and dine, and sometimes to sup in it, especially when Miss Howe, who had an equal liking to it, was her visiter or guest.

She describes it, in another letter (which appears not) as 'pointing to a pretty variegated landscape of wood, water and hilly country;' which had pleased her so much that she had drawn it; the piece hanging up, in her parlour, among some of her other drawings.

In the same letter,⁵ Clarissa considers the possibility of escape:

Then, perhaps, they have no notion of the back door;

¹Ibid., II:181

⁴Ibid., II:299

²Ibid., II:251

⁵Ibid., II:301-302

³Ibid., II:266

as it is seldom opened, and leads to a place so pathless and lonesome. If not, there can be no other way to escape (if one would) unless by the plashy lane, so full of springs, by which your servant reaches the solitary wood house; to which lane one must descend from a high bank that bounds the poultry yard. For, as to the front way, one must pass through the house to that, and in sight of the parlours and the servants' hall; and then have the open court-yard to go through, and, by means of the iron gate, be full in view, as one passes over the lawn, for a quarter of a mile together; the young plantations of elms and limes affording yet but little shade or covert.

The Ivy Summer-house is the most convenient for this heart-affecting purpose [i.e.-hiding to wait a chance for escape] of any spot in the garden, as it is not far from the back-door, and yet in another alley, as you may remember. Then it is seldom resorted to by any body else, except in the summer-months, because it is cool....

And Richardson adds, no doubt at the insistence of his coterie, the following foot-note description of the inherently romantic "place so pathless and lonesome" referred to in the first sentence of the preceding passage:

This, in another of her letters, (which neither is inserted,) is thus described:-'A piece of ruins upon it, the remains of an old chapel, now standing in the midst of the coppice; here and there an overgrown oak, surrounded with ivy and mistletoe, starting up, to sanctify, as it were, the awful solemnness of the place: a spot too, where a man having been found hanging some years ago, it used to be thought of by us when children, and by the maid-servants, with a degree of horror, (it being actually the habitation of owls, ravens, and other ominous birds,) as haunted by ghosts, goblins, spectres: the general result of the country loneliness and ignorance: notions which, early propagated, are apt to leave impressions even upon minds grown strong enough at the same time to despise the like credulous follies in others.

(This Gothic grave yard touch may have quite possibly been influenced by Addison's somewhat similar passage, quoted on page 160.)

In Volume III the exterior Harlowe Place setting is concluded. Letters 1 and 3 detail the account of how Lovelace tricked her into flight with him:

I [Clarissa] asked her [Betty, the servant] some questions about the cascade, which had been out of order, and lately mended, and expressed a curiosity to see how it played in order to induce her (how cunning to cheat myself, as it proved) to go thither, if she found me not where she left me; it being a part of the garden most distant from the ivy summer-house.

She could have hardly got into the house when I heard the first signal--O how my heart fluttered!--but no time was to be lost I stept to the garden-door; and seeing a clear coast, unbolted the already unlocked door--and there he was, all impatience, waiting for me.¹

When she refused and tried to withdraw into the garden, Lovelace declared he'd brave her relatives and come in too. Then by the ruse of having a great knocking set up on the other side of the garden door, he caused her to seek flight rather than risk discovery, and ran with her to the carriage waiting at the "by-road fronting the private path to Harlowe-paddock."²

The summary just given shows how carefully Richardson worked-in minute and distinctive details of setting over the space of several hundred pages, utilizing many of them again and again, and finally tying most of them together, without any inconsistency in his account of Clarissa's escape. And, incidentally, we are furnished with a rather full account of the exterior of a typical upper-middle class dwelling. No better technique in the narrative utilization of colorful

¹Ibid., III:6-7

²Ibid., III:24

setting gradually built up can be found in the work of any writer of fictional prose down through Fielding's time; and I can recall none in the years immediately following. It appears to me that Richardson showed the way to the development of a type of setting technique that is of extreme value to the writer of fiction.

The interior of Harlowe Place is described with far less effectiveness. Richardson is content to mention the names of rooms: the adjoining parlours of Bella and Clarissa, the bed-chambers of various members of the family, the father's study, and the great parlour. He does, however, make an occasional effective use of bare stage properties, as in the following account of Clarissa's interview with Bella:

I want not to be led, said I; and since I can plead your invitation I will go: and was posting to the stairs accordingly in my passion--but she got between me and the door, and shut it

Let me first, Bold one, said she, apprise them [her parents] of your visit--for your own sake let me--for my brother is with them. But yet openingit again, seeing me shrink back--Go, if you will!--Why don't you go?-- Why don't you go, Miss--following me to my closet whither I retired, with my heart full, and pulled the sash-door after me; and could no longer hold in my tears.

Nor would I answer one word to her repeated aggravation, nor to her demands upon me to open my door (for the key was on the inside); nor so much as turn my head towards her, as she looked through the glass at me. And at last, which vexed her to the heart, I drew the silk curtain, that she should not see me, and down she went muttering all the way.¹

¹Ibid., II:55

The locale for much of the action of Vol. III, IV, and V is the Widow Sinclair's fashionable whore house. There is very little distinctive setting here, nor is this surprizing when we recall that Richardson confessed to Stinstra, his Dutch translator, that, although he described houses of ill repute he had never, to his knowledge, been in a vile house or in company with a lewd woman.¹ Nevertheless, his description of Sinclair's is fairly convincing because of certain elements of circumstantiality which he adroitly throws in. He causes Lovelace's agent, Doleman, to write Lovelace a letter (designed to fall into Clarissa's hands) in which he relates that after looking over lodgings at Bedford Street, Covent Garden, at Norfolk Street, and at Cecil Street overlooking the Thames and Surrey-hills, he concluded that Mrs. Sinclair's lodgings in Dover Street would be more suitable; he then goes on to describe them as follows:

....two good houses, distant from each other, only joined by a large handsome passage. The inner-house is the genteeliest, and very elegantly furnished; but you may have the use of a very handsome parlour in the outer-house, if you choose to look into the street.

A little garden belongs to the inner-house, in which the old gentlewoman has displayed a true female fancy; having crammed it with vases, flower-pots, and figures, without number.

As these lodgings seem to me the most likely to please you, I was more particular in my inquiries about them. The apartments she has to let are in the inner-house:

¹See Brian Downs, op.cit. p.146

they are a dining-room, two neat parlours, a withdrawing-room, two or three handsome bedchambers, one with a pretty light closet in it, which looks into the little garden, all furnished in taste.¹

So we are given a general background for many dramatic episodes, the accompanying setting for which is almost entirely bare stage properties. Primarily of this type are such famous scenes as the attempted seduction at the time of the false fire alarm,² the death of Mrs. Sinclair³ (the only setting beyond the "troubled bed" being the effluvia that arose "from so many contaminated carcases"), and the thwarting of Clarissa's second attempt to escape. Though it is not the most effective, the latter is quoted here as a brief example of Richardson's technique in handling such scenes:

Insolent villain! said the furious lady. And rising, ran to the window, and threw up the sash, (she knew not, I suppose, that there were iron railings before the windows.) And when she could not get out into the street, clasping her uplifted hands together, having dropt her parcel--For the love of God, good honest man!--For the love of God, mistress!--(to two passers by,) a poor, poor creature, said she, ruined!--

I clasped her in my arms, people beginning to gather about the window: and then she cried out Murder! help! help! and carried her up to the dining-room, in spite of her little plotting heart, (as I may now call it,) although she violently struggled, catching hold of the bannisters here and there, as she could. I would have seated her there; but she sunk down half-motionless, pale as ashes. And a violent burst of tears happily relieved her.

Dorcus wept over her. The wench was actually moved for her.⁴

¹Clarissa, III:219

²Ibid., V:101-113

³Ibid., IX:66-69

⁴Ibid., VI:120

of Mrs. Moore's Hampstead house, to which Clarissa escapes after her first stay at Sinclair's, we are only told enough to give a bare background for Lovelace's successful search: "There were three rooms on a floor: two of them handsome; and the third....still handsomer; but a lady was in it."¹

The setting for the incidents in Mrs. Smith's house and glove shop at Kings Street, Covent Garden is somewhat more detailed. Clarissa, we are informed, occupies "two neat rooms, with plain but clean furniture, on the first floor....; one they call the dining room."² When Lovelace comes searching for her while she is temporarily absent, he is told first that "the servants' rooms, and the working rooms, are up those stairs, and another pair" but that nobody's there that he wants. Not satisfied, he arrogantly barges into the shop, takes some goods that appeal to him, sells cavalierly to a surprised customer. His own description of the shop, which is marked by at least one distinctive local color touch, follows:

When I came into the shop, seeing no chair or stool, I went behind the compter, and sat down under an arched kind of canopy of carved work, which these proud traders, emulating the royal niche-filers, often give themselves, while a joint-stool, perhaps, serves those by whom they get their bread: such is the dignity of trade in this merchantile nation.³

¹Ibid., V:190

²Ibid., VII:5

³Ibid., VII:40

However, despite the fact that most of the action takes place in the chamber of the dying Clarissa, that locale is not described save for its most striking article of furniture: Clarissa's coffin, which is placed under her window, not far from her bed side, "like a harpsichord, though covered over to the ground"; and which she uses to write and read upon, "as others would upon a desk or table."¹ This coffin has on it the following emblems, each accompanied by an appropriate scriptural quotation: "a crowned serpent, with a tail in its mouth, forming a ring, the symbol of eternity"; an hour glass, winged-symbol that mortal life is over; an urn, the symbol of rest; and a lily snapt short off, symbol of a life ended in its prime. It is covered by a "fine black cloth, and lined with white satin".² Aside from showing with what complacency and forethought Clarissa prepares for death, it is used as a dramatic device for eliciting sensibility on the part of her visitors: the apothecary, Mr. Goddard, is terribly shocked by the sight of it;³ and when Colonel Morden, retiring behind a screen so as not to startle the just awaking Clarissa, comes upon it, he is so startled himself that he cries out "Good God, what's here!" and is overwhelmed with grief.⁴

¹ Ibid., VIII:244

² Ibid., VIII:223-225

³ Ibid., VIII:244

⁴ Ibid., VIII:332

Certainly the most effective and colorful interior setting in Clarissa is that of the prison room in High-Holborn, a room located in the home of Mr. Rowland, the sheriff's officer. Here Clarissa is brought after being seized for non-payment of debt. Richardson carefully postpones giving us a detailed description of the prison quarters until he is prepared to use it to greatly intensify the drama and to complete the reform of one of Lovelace's agents. At Clarissa's arrival we are told only that she entered through a "wretched court", and was lodged, at her own insistence, in the prisoners' quarters in "a hole of a garret" where she "sat up in a chair all night, the back against the door; having, it seems, thrust a broken piece of a poker through the staples where a bolt had been on the inside."¹ It is not until after she has been visited by Sally and Polly, who try to get her to return to Sinclair's and until after she has become very sick and has made some attempts to get her clothes sold in order to pay part of her debt, that Richardson approaches the climax of his scene and gives us the full setting along with the dramatic action. Belford, at Lovelace's command, comes to see that the legal action against Clarissa is dismissed, and writes this account of his reception:

About six this morning, I went to Rowland's. Mrs. Sinclair was to follow me, in order to dismiss the action; but not to come in sight.

¹ Ibid., VII:65,69,70

Rowland, upon inquiry, told me, that the lady was extremely ill; and that she desired, that no one but his wife or maid should come near her.

I said I must see her. I told him my business overnight, and I must see her.

His wife went up: but returned presently, saying she could not get her to speak to her; yet that her eyelids moved; though she either would not, or could not, open them, to look up at her.

Oons, woman, said I, the lady may be in a fit: the lady may be dying--let me go up. Show me the way.

A horrid hole of a house, in an alley they call a court; stairs wretchedly narrow even to the first floor rooms: and into a den they led me, with broken walls, which had been papered, as I saw by a multitude of tacks, and some torn bits held on by the rusty heads.

The floor, indeed, was clean, but the ceiling was smoked with variety of figures, and initials of names, that had been the woeful employment of wretches who had no other way to amuse themselves.

A bed at one corner, with coarse curtains tacked up at the feet to the ceiling; because the curtain rings were broken off; but a coverlid upon it with a cleanish look, though plaguily in tatters, and the corners tied up in tassels, that the rents in it might go no farther.

The windows dark and double-barred, the tops boarded up to save mending; and only a little four-paned eyelet-hole of a casement to let in air; more, however, coming in at broken panes than could come in at that.

Four old Turkey-worked chairs, bursten-bottomed, the stuffing staring out.

An old, tottering, worm-eaten table, that had more nails bestowed in mending it to make it stand, than the table cost fifty years ago, when new.

On the mantle-piece was an iron shove-up candle-stick, with a lighted candle in it, twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, four of them, I suppose, for a penny.

Near that, on the same shelf, was an old looking-glass, cracked through the middle, breaking out into a thousand points; the crack given it, perhaps, in a rage by some poor creature, to whom it gave the representation of his heart's woes in his face.

The chimney had two half-tiles in it, on one side, and one whole one on the other, which showed it had been in better plight; but now the very mortar had followed the rest of the tiles in every other place, and left the bricks bare.

An old half-barred stove-grate was in the chimney; and in that a large stone bottle without a neck, filled with baleful yew, as an evergreen, withered southern-wood, dead sweet-briar, and sprigs of rue in flower.

To finish the shocking description, in a dark nook stood an old broken-bottomed cane couch, without a squab or coverlid, sunk at one corner, and unmortised by the failing of one of its worm-eaten legs, which lay in two pieces under the wretched piece of furniture it could no longer support.

And this, thou Horrid Lovelace, was the bed-chamber of the divine Clarissa!!!

I had leisure to cast my eye on these things: for, going up softly, the poor lady turned not about at our entrance; nor, till I spoke, moved her head.

She was kneeling in the corner of the room, near the dismal window, against the table, on an old bolster (as it seemed to be) of the cane couch, half-covered by her handkerchief; her back to the door; which was only shut to (no need of fastening;) her arms crossed upon the table, the forefinger of her right hand in the Bible. She had perhaps been reading in it, and could no longer read. Paper, pens, ink, lay by her book on the table. Her dress was white damask, exceeding neat; but her stays seemed not tight-laced. I was told afterwards, that her laces had been cut, when she fainted away at her entrance into this cursed place; and she had not been solicitous enough about her dress to send for others. Her head-dress was a little discomposed; her charming hair in natural ringlets, as you have heretofore described it, but a little tangled, as if not lately combed; irregularly shading one side of the loveliest neck in the world; as her disordered rumpled handkerchief did the other. Her face (O how altered from what I had seen it! yet lovely in spite of her grief and sufferings!) was reclined, when we entered, upon her crossed arms; but so as not more than one side of it could be hid.

When I surveyed the room around, and the kneeling lady, sunk with majesty too in her white flowing robes, (for she had not on a hoop) spreading the dark, though not dirty, floor, and illuminating that horrid corner; her linen beyond imagination white, considering that she had not been undressed ever since she had been here; I thought my concern would have choked me. Something rose in my throat, I know not what, which made me for a moment, guggle, as it were, for speech.¹

¹ Ibid., VII:86-89

Belford goes on to relate that as he upbraided the keeper and his wife, Clarissa raised her head, and waved him toward the door; he begged on his knees to be allowed to release her--but she charged him with being Lovelace's agent; he denounced Lovelace, whereupon she bid him rise, gave him her ring and clothes with instructions to sell them to pay her debts, and fainted. He adds that he retired, and that it was not until the next evening that Clarissa had recovered enough to leave. Setting is here probably more brilliantly sketched and utilized than in any scene within the scope of this investigation. The atmosphere for the height of the drama is merely hinted at in preliminary scenes. Then Belford enters, describes the setting in all its minute and detailed evidence of squalor and wretchedness, contrasts with it the splendor of the divine Clarissa, and shows its effect upon him by completing his reformation in a denunciation of Lovelace. No other writer in the scope of our study produces a locale with so strong a dominant emotional tone, and utilizes its detail so minutely and so ably to heighten the drama and to produce character reaction. Here is an achievement of first importance in the development of realistic setting. And it has an added secondary importance in that it shows settings exhibiting the squalor of incarceration with a vividness that makes almost insignificant

the earlier attempts of Fennor and Defoe; and that it reveals that, though he did not profit by it, Fielding had within his reach an example of the type of setting which would have made his Amelia a much more effective sociological novel.

Sir Charles Grandison

Setting in Sir Charles Grandison is not, on the whole, as skillful as in Clarissa. The fact that Richardson knew little of the inner workings of high society life, and that he set part of his story in Italy though he had no first-hand knowledge of that country, may help to explain this. He continues to make use of actual place names such as Grosvenor Square, St. James Square, Mayfair Chapel, and Smithfield; and to be content with generic places such as the garden walk, the parlour and the closet, for most of his incidents. He does show, however, a greater propensity to link generic names than in his other novels; for instance, he speaks of curtains drawn about a chair, a drawing room adjoining the dining room, a chair by the fireside, and so forth.

Descriptive setting is slight except in the last volume of this seven-volume novel. The foreign settings are particularly bare, Grandison rescues Jeronymo, Clemin-tina's brother, "in the Cremonese....in a little thicket

at some distance from the road".¹ Most of the rest of the action in Italy occurs at the palace "at Bologna, and in the neighborhood of Urbino".² Richardson attempts no distinctive description of this palace. Once, to be sure, in describing how Clementina tried to commit suicide after being denied a sight of Grandison, he tells us that she left a ladder (by which she had hoped to escape) "against a wall" and "ran till she came in sight of a great cascade, into which, had she not by a cross-alley been intercepted by the general, it is feared she would have thrown herself."³ But this is the only touch of description. At all other times, in handling Italian locale, he is content to make dramatic use of bare stage properties, the background for one of his most dramatic episodes being merely a closet with an open door.⁴ The few French scenes are equally as bare except for the one in which Sir Hargrave Pollexfen is rescued from his attackers by Sir Charles. In that scene we have one touch of convincing color: Grandison, having been informed by Pollexfen's escaped coachman that his master was being attacked on a nearby hill called Mont Martre, orders his

¹ Sir Charles Grandison, III:184 (Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincott & Co., 1902)

² Ibid., III:182

³ Ibid., IV:27

⁴ Ibid., III:195-196

post-boy to await him at a convenient spot nereby, while he rides off to the rescue; this spot Richardson describes as follows:

There are, it seems, trees planted on each side the road from St. Denis to Paris, but which, as France is an open and unenclosed country, would not, but for the hill, have hindered the seeing a great way off so many men on horseback. There is also a ditch on either hand, but places left for owners to come at their grounds with their carts and other carriages. Sir Charles ordered the post-boy to drive to one of those passages.¹

Descriptive English settings in the first six books are nearly as unsatisfactory as the foreign scenes, though there are a few scenes worth noting. The most interesting concern Pollexfen's kidnapping of Harriet Byron and her eventual rescue by Sir Charles. Thinking that she is being taken home from the masquerade by Lady Betty's chairmen, Harriet is borne by chairmen in Pollexfen's employ but not in his confidence, toward a widow's house in the country, to which they are led by trusted servants. When they have progressed as far as Lissom Green, Harriet draws the side curtains, and finding herself in the midst of fields, cries out to God for protection.² Arriving at the widow's house, Harriet is carried in; and the chairmen are paid, and guided "over rough and dirty by-ways into a path that pointed London-ward, but plainly so much about, with design to make it

¹Ibid., IV:307

²Ibid., I:181

difficult for them to find the way again".¹ Harriet's friends discover her plight when these chairmen are located by Lady Betty's chairmen, and agree to help find the hide-out. They finally find what appears to be the place, and ask a neighboring alehouse keeper if the suspected house does not have "a long garden, and a back door out of it to a dirty lane and fields".² When he says yes, and tells of how he observed, from "an arbour-like porch nearby",³ a scene similar to the one they had participated in, they are sure of their identification. So the setting becomes a narrative device on which the discovery of the hideout depends. Meanwhile, however, Hargrave Pollexfen, fearing discovery, forces Harriet to go away with him in his chariot. And Harriet, writing of her adventure in retrospect, relates that "at one place the chariot drove out of the road over rough ways and little hillocks",⁴ that they had stopped once for refreshment at "a large, wild, heath-like place between two roads as it seemed",⁵ and that she was rescued by Sir Charles after "the chariot had not many minutes got into the great road again, when it stopped on a dispute between the coachman and the coachman of another chariot and six".⁶

¹ Ibid., I:182

² Ibid., I:184

³ Idem.

⁴ Ibid., I:242

⁵ Ibid., I:243

⁶ Ibid., I:244

The setting here, while not extensive, does nevertheless increase the seeming probability of the scene.

Two other settings are worth noting. In the first, a bit of vivid and distinctive local color appears through the description of how Lucy's Uncle prepares for the celebration, by the tenants of the estates, of Sir Charles' and Harriet's wedding:

He will have the great barn, as it is called, cleared out; a light, large building, which is to be illuminated at night with a profusion of lights; and there all his tenants and those of Shirley-Manor to be treated.... Half a dozen bonfires are to be lighted up, round the big barn; and the stacks of wood are not to be spared, to turn winter into summer, as my uncle expresses himself.¹

In the second, while the scene is not as colorful, the wedding background is convincingly outlined, though no great detail is given:

....when it [the coach] stopt at the churchyard, an enclosed one, whose walls kept off coaches, near a stone's throw from the church-porch, then was my lovely cousin put to it; especially as her grandmother walked so slowI should tell you that the passage from the entrance of the churchyard is railed in....

Lucy goes on to describe Harriet's ordeal as she walked up the path, along the sides of which crowds of peasants pressed against the railing and cheered as the flower-girls strewed their blossoms; she then relates how:

Sir Charles seated his venerable charge on a covered bench on the left of the altar, and on another covered bench on the right side, without the rail, we all, but the brides-maids and their partner's [sic] took our seats.

¹Ibid., VI:281-282

She concludes by describing the wedding party as it goes back down the long path, with the peasants cheering and the churchbells ringing.¹ While the setting here is not detailed, there is every evidence of a convincing naturalness.

Setting in Volume 7 of Sir Charles Grandison is greater in extent than anywhere else in Richardson's work. One scene centers round Sir Charles' visit to Clementina after her arrival in England; the setting is bare, but the drawn window curtains which darken the room increase and intensify the reader's awareness of the extreme discomposure and sensibility of Clementina on first seeing Sir Charles after his marriage to Harriet: so great is her discomposure, that, despite the darkened room, she soon has to withdraw to compose herself before giving Sir Charles the opportunity to tell her that Harriet is another Clementina and is prepared to receive her as the dearest of sisters.²

All the other settings of importance are descriptive of Grandison Hall, which is presented in great detail throughout many pages. There is only the most flimsy and inadequate narrative justification for most of this detail; the assumption of the author seems to be that since Harriet has come to inspect Grandison Hall as a newly married woman, the reader

¹ Ibid., VI:317ff

² Ibid., VII:133

should be interested in the most minute details of that inspection. It seems likely that Richardson had this assumption forced upon him, in part at least, by the demands of his feminine admirers for a complete picture of Harriet's new establishment. Probably he could not resist their flattering appeals. There are signs, however, that his own sense of artistry rebelled at introducing into the last volume of a story nearly complete, pages of unutilized description of a place where practically nothing is to happen. In the first place, he adds the following extensive description of the exterior of Grandison Hall in a footnote to a passage where Harriet has simply remarked that it is "delightful":

This large and convenient house is situated in a spacious park which has several fine avenues leading to it.

On the north side of the park flows a winding stream that may well be called a river, abounding with trout and other fish, the current quickened by a noble cascade, which tumbles down to foaming waters from a rock, which is continued to some extent in a ledge of rockwork rudely disposed.

The park is remarkable for its prospects, lawns and rich appearing clumps of trees of large growth, which must therefore have been planted by the ancestors of the excellent owner, who, contenting himself to open and enlarge many fine prospects, delights to preserve, as much as possible, the plantations of his ancestors, and particularly thinks it a kind of impiety to fell a tree that was planted by his father.

On the south side of the river, on a natural and easy ascent, is a neat but plain villa, in the rustic taste, erected by Sir Thomas, the flat roof of which presents a noble prospect. This villa contains convenient lodging rooms, and one large room in which he used sometimes to entertain his friends.

The gardener's home is a pretty little building. The man is a sober and diligent man; he is in years, has a housewifely good creature of a wife. Content appears in

the countenances of both. How happy must they be!

The gardens, vineyards,&s., are beautifully laid out. The orangery is flourishing--everything indeed is that belongs to Sir Charles Grandison. Alcoves, little temples, seats are erected at different points of view; the orchards, lawns and grass walks have sheep for gardeners; and the whole being bound only by sunk fences, the eye is carried to views that have no bounds.

The orchard, that takes up near three acres of ground, is planted in a peculiar taste. A neat stone bridge in the center of it is thrown over the river. It is planted in a natural slope, the higher fruit trees, as pears, in a semicircular row first; apples at further distances next; cherries, plums, standard apricots,&s, all which in the season of blossoming, one row gradually lower than another, must make a charming variety of blooming sweets to the eye from the top of the rustic villa, which commands the whole.

The outside of this orchard next the north is planted with three rows of trees, at proper distances from each other; one of pines, one of cedars, one of Scotch firs, in the like semicircular order, which, at the same time that they afford a perpetual verdure to the eye and shady walks in the summer, defend the orchard from the cold and blighting winds.

This plantation was made by direction of Sir Thomas in his days of fancy. We have heard that he had a poetical, and, consequently, a fanciful taste.¹

In the footnote of which the preceding is a part, Richardson remarks that it is a description by Lucy in "a letter which does not appear", and in the novel proper he has Harriet remark that since Lucy will be very particular in her letters, she will not "encroach on that slow girl's province". Lucy's description is, of course, detailed and quite well unified, giving an adequate picture of a formal eighteenth century estate, but, as we have seen, its narrative justification is slight. In it, however, Richardson appears to give a second

¹Ibia., VII:30-31

sign of rebelling at his admirers' probable demand for inorganic description by having Lucy make one or two observations on that setting in such a way as to use it to reflect traits of Sir Charles' character; she shows his tendency to ancestor worship by her remark concerning his pious preservation of his father's trees, and hints at his generosity in her comment concerning the gardener and possibly at his inherited sense of combining the practical and the beautiful in her comment about the orchards.

This same tendency to provide a slight, though generally inadequate artistic justification for the introduction of descriptions not really advantageous to the artistry of his story as a whole but necessary to assure the continuance of the feminine admiration and adulation which his egoism demanded, is evidenced in most of the rest of his descriptions of parts of Grandison Hall. Again and again, as will soon be evident, he seems to attempt to lessen the inutility of those long passages by occasionally making items in them either directly reflect some characteristic of Grandison or call forth some comment indicative of his or his wife's personality. And in doing this, he applies, often inaptly to be sure, the technique of using setting as a means of characterization--something he seems to have learned from Addison's Sir Roger De Coverley Papers.

This is perhaps best illustrated in the series of descriptions which make up letter six of volume seven. The first is Harriet's initial impression of the room designed to be her own drawing room:

My dear Sir Charles led me, followed by all our rejoicing friends, through a noble dining room to the drawing room, called the lady's....

This room is elegantly furnished. It is hung with a light green velvet, delicately ornamented; the chairs of the same, the frames of them gilt, as is the frame of a noble cabinet in it. 'My mother's, my dearest love', he whispered; 'it will always be fashionable, and you, I know, will value it on her account.' Indeed I shall. He presented me with the keys. 'Here perhaps you will deposit your letters and correspondences, some of which (the continuation of those I have had the honour to see) you will allow me to peruse--but of choice, remember, madam. For your whole heart must be in the grant of the favors you will confer upon me of this kind.'

'Dear Sir', said I, 'leave me power of speech: my will shall be yours in everything.'....

Everybody admires the elegance of this drawing room. The finest japan china that I ever saw, except that of Lady G's, which she so whimsically received at the hands of her lord, took particularly every female eye.

Sir Charles led me into a closet adjoining. 'Your oratory, your library, my love, when you shall have furnished it, as you desired you might, by your chosen collection from Northamptonshire.'

It was a sweet little apartment: elegant book cases unfurnished; every other ornament complete. How had he been at work to oblige me, by Dr. Bartlett's good offices, while my heart perhaps was torn part of the time, with uncertainty! ¹

The utilization of description here is a little better than is usual in these scenes. The introductory sentence adds a slight narrative justification for what follows, and the dialogue helps to keep the description from falling still-

¹Ibid., VII:26-27

born on the reader's ears. Grandison's comments confirm that he has a mother-complex, which the reader has always suspected, and reveal what Richardson no doubt regarded as Sir Charles' courtesy, tact, forethought, and husbandly deference to wifely integrity. And Harriet's comments and responses reveal her dutiful subservience to her husband's wishes, and her adoration of all his characteristics--the things most likely to please Saint Charles!

In the same letter is the following description of Grandison's study:

We found my uncle and Mr. Deane admiring the disposition of everything, as well as the furniture. The glass cases are neat, and, as Mr. Bartlett told us, stored with well chosen books in all sciences. Mr. Deane praised the globes, the orrery, and the instruments of all sorts, for geographical, astronomical, and other scientific observations. It is ornamented with pictures, as Dr. Bartlett told us, of the best masters of the Italian and Flemish schools--statues, bustoes, bronzes; and there also, placed in a distinguished manner, are the two rich cabinets of medals, gems and other curiosities, presented to him by Lady Olivia. He mentioned what they contained and by whom presented, and said he would show us at leisure the contents. 'They are not mine', added he: 'I only give them a place till the generous owner shall make some worthy man happy. His they must be. It would be a kind of robbery to take them from a family that, for near a century past, have been collecting them.¹

Here, once again, the description retains some life because of the introduction of various comments by people within the setting. Grandison's good taste is implied by the items

¹Ibid., VII:28

mentioned, and his expansive integrity and magnanimity by his comment.

Still in the same letter we are regaled with a running description of the rest of the owners' quarters:

The situation is delightful. The house is very spacious. It is built in the form of an H, both fronts pretty much alike. The hall, the dining-parlour, two drawing-rooms--one adjoining to the study, the other to the dining parlour (which, with the study, mentioned already, and other rooms, that I shall leave to Lucy to describe, make the ground floor)--are handsome, and furnished in an elegant but not sumptuous taste, the hangings of some of them beautiful paper only. There is adjoining to the study, a room called the music-parlour [details of which are given in another letter]¹ so called in Sir Thomas's time, and furnished with several fine musical instruments....We are to be shown this music parlour by-and by.

The dining-room is noble and well-proportioned: it goes over the hall and dining-parlour. It is hung with crimson damask, adorned with valuable pictures. The furniture is rich, but less ornamented than that of the lady's drawing-room.

The best bed-chamber, adjoining, is hung with fine tapestry. The bed is of crimson velvet, lined with white silk; chairs and curtains of the same. Two fine pictures, drawn by Sir Godfrey--one of Sir Charles, the other of Lady Grandison--whole lengths, took my eye (with what reverence, that of my lady!) Lady L., Lady G., as girls, and Sir Charles as a boy of about ten years of age, made three other fine whole lengths. I must contemplate them when I have more leisure.

There is a fine suite of rooms on the first floor which we just stepped into, mostly furnished with damask....

The gardens and lawns seem from the windows of this spacious house to be as boundless as the mind of the owner, and as free and open as his countenance.

My uncle took my aunt out from this company in a kind of hurry. I saw his eyes glisten, and was curious, on his return, to know the occasion. This was his speech to her, unable to check his emotion: 'What a man is this, Dame Selby! We were surely wanting in respect to him when he was among us. To send such a one to an inn!

¹ Ibid., VII:letter 7

Fie upon us! Lord be good to me, how are things come about! Who would have thought it? Sometimes I wonder the girl is not as proud as Lucifer; at other times that she is able to look him in the face.'

To this convenient house belongs an elegant little chapel, neatly decorated. But Sir Charles, when down, generally goes to the parish church of which he is a patron.

The gallery I have not yet seen. Dr. Bartlett tells me it is adorned with a long line of ancestors [details of their portraits she gives in letter 7, and adds that her heart exulted at the thought of one day being placed among them and that she resolved to humbly endeavor to deserve her good fortune, and leave the rest to Providence]¹

The first half of this description, so enumerative in style that it suggests some sort of schoolboy exercise, is still-born; and Richardson is not able to bring it back to life either by throwing in the later touch wherein he asks the reader to regard the gardens and lawns as symbols of Grandison traits, or even by the Selby story, which, in itself, is rather good and shows the impression the old paragon made on some of his less virtuous and less prosperous friends.

The description of the servants' quarters is likewise not really made an organic part of the story:

The very servants live in paradise. There is room for everything to be in order; everything is in order. The offices so distinct, yet so conveniently communicating--charmingly contrived!....

I was pleased with one piece of furniture in the house-keepers room, which neither you, madam, nor my aunt, have in yours. My aunt says Selby House shall not be long after her return without it. It is a servants' library in three classes: one of books of divinity and morality;

¹Ibid., VII:28-30

another for housewifery; a third of history, true adventures, voyages and innocent amusement. I, II, III, are marked on the cases, and the same on the back of each book....They are bound in buff for strength.¹

This attempt, if it is one, to utilize this setting to show Grandison's care for the mental and moral welfare of his employees falls flat; at best it is a clumsy and ill-considered effort at characterization through setting; at worst, it may not even have had that justification.

The final setting to be considered is one in which Richardson uses the Grandison Hall garden as a background for eliciting manifestations of extreme 'sensibility' from his main characters. He gives the following account of Clementina's farewell to Grandison Hall:

When we saw Sir Charles enter the garden, we [Harriet and Clementina] stood still, arm in arm, expecting and inviting his approach. 'Sweet sisters, lovely friends', said he, when come up to us, taking a hand of each, and joining them, bowing on both. 'Let me mark this blessed spot with my eye', looking round him, then on me; 'A tear on my Harriet's cheek?' He dried it off with my own hankerchief. 'Friendship, dearest creatures, will make at pleasure a safe bridge over the narrow seas; it will cut an easy passage through rocks and mountains, and make England and Italy one country. Kindred souls are always near.'

'In that hope, my good chevalier; in that hope my good Lady Grandison, will Clementina be happy, though the day of separation must not be far distant. And will you here renew your promise that when it shall be convenient to you, my dear Lady Grandison, you will not fail to grace our Italy with your presences?'

'We do! We do!

'Promise me again', said the noble lady. 'I too have marked the spot with my eye' (standing still as Sir Charles

¹Ibid., VII:letter 9

had done, looking round her). 'The orangery on the right hand; that distant clump of oaklings on the left; the villa, the rivulet before us; the cascade in view; that obelisk behind us. Be this the spot to be recollected as witness to the promise, when we are far, far distant from each other.'

We both repeated the promise; and Sir Charles said (and he is drawing a plan accordingly) that a little temple should be erected on that very spot, to be consecrated to our triple friendship, and since she had so happily marked it.¹

To the modern reader, inclined to laugh at the outpourings of sensibility which Richardson regarded as the means of the education of the heart, this scene appears to belong in a silent-movie melodrama--and he finds it even more amusing when he recalls that these characters had already arranged to meet once more in a fortnight. Yet to Richardson's credit it must be said that the setting is utilized appropriately for the purpose which he had in mind, forming a good background to which to tie a sentimental parting.

Conclusion

Despite the long stretches of narrative during which Richardson was content to employ bare stage property setting or no setting at all, and despite his failure to utilize successfully some of his longest descriptive passages, Richardson can hardly be ranked below Defoe in importance in the history of the development of the technique of employing

¹Ibid., VII:312-313

setting in realistic narrative. He did, it is true, follow his predecessors in using bare stage properties with dramatic effectiveness in his episodes, in naming actual places and frequently linking them, and in providing distinctive descriptive setting occasionally for mere local color background. But he surpassed them in several ways. Probably his greatest achievement was to develop, in certain incidents, a technique of building up setting gradually, bit by bit, by using over and over slight descriptive touches of various parts of the same locale, and finally tying most of those touches together in a fast-moving narrative scene in which they form a unified part essential to the action. This, in itself, was a great and momentous achievement in the development of setting technique. In utilizing this device, he at times employed the circumstantial method in a modified form from that used by Defoe. And he succeeded, meanwhile, in giving a more complete picture of the exterior milieu of upper middle-class life than anyone had given before him. To this must be added that, in occasional scenes, he built up, to vitalize the narrative, a stronger interactive emotional tone than any previous writer of prose fiction, a tone which colors the action and brings forth response from the characters. And he also showed how a touch of setting, introduced at the beginning of a narrative episode, could set the mood, and satisfy the reader until the author

was ready to produce a more detailed setting. Furthermore, utilizing a method he probably learned from Addison, he employed setting to reflect, or to elicit reactions and comments indicative of, traits of character; though his employment of this device was not always the most skilful, he must be given credit for being the first author to use setting rather extensively in this way in a long, unified, fictional narrative. That in Richardson's work we find, in embryo at least, so many of the important modern methods of utilizing setting, should indicate his importance. In his novels we find for the first time the employment, by one novelist, of varied techniques of setting, techniques which, before his time, had not existed in any fairly effective combination.

XI

HENRY FIELDING

His career as a playwright and theatre manager abruptly terminated by the Licensing Act of 1737, Henry Fielding found in Richardson's Pamela a fallacious point of view toward life that prompted him to transfer to the novel that skill in satire and burlesque which had made him anathema to Sir Robert Walpole and others. Beginning Joseph Andrews as a light-hearted parody of Pamela, he was soon launched seriously on a career as a novelist,- a career to which he brought the sanity, sympathy, insight and sense of humor so essential to a great novelist.

General Attitude Toward Setting

Despite his amazing talent, Fielding,in writing his novels,frequently evaded the problem of describing settings in a sufficiently minute and colorful way to provide the distinctive colorful backgrounds which add so much to fictional narrative. In A Journey From This World To The Next, where Elysium is one of the important locales,he merely remarks that it is a "happy region,whose beauty no painting of the imagination can describe" - though as an afterthought he does add the single detail that it contains "a delicious orange grove."¹ In Amelia, he takes his characters to Vauxhall, and

¹Miscellanies I:46 (All references to Fielding's novels are to the Works of Fielding,National Library Edition.Bigelow, Brown and Co.,n.d.)

then announces:

The extreme beauty and elegance of this place is well known to almost everyone of my readers; and happy it is for me that it is so, since to give an adequate idea of it would exceed my power of description. To delineate the particular beauties of these gardens would, indeed, require as much pains, and as much paper too, as to rehearse all the good actions of their master....¹

In A Voyage To Lisbon, while expressing his admiration for the glories of the sunset, he attempts no particularized description of it, but takes refuge in the following generalizations:

Not a single cloud presented itself to our view, and the sun himself was the only object which engrossed our whole attention. He did indeed set with a majesty which is incapable of description [italics mine], from which, while the horizon was yet blazing with glory, our eyes were called off to the opposite part to survey the moon, which was then at full, and which in rising presented us with the second object that this world hath offered to our vision. Compared to these, the pageantry of theatres, or splendor of courts, are sights almost below the regard of children.²

In Tom Jones, he has Tom tell Partridge, when they have arrived at the bottom of a steep hill, that the view from the top would probably be "a charming prospect" for "the solemn gloom which the moon casts on all objects is beyond expression beautiful"³; nor does Fielding describe the scene further. And in the same work he excuses himself for not depicting the view from Mazard Hill, "one of the most noble prospects in the world"; we would "present it to the reader", he says, "but for two reasons: first, we despair of making those who have seen this prospect admire our description; secondly, we very much doubt whether

¹Amelia III:62-63

²Miscellanies I:328-29

³Tom Jones II:252

those who have not seen it would understand it."¹ Moreover, he half-heartedly condones the frequent inadequacy of his locale painting by contending that description of scene, or even extreme awe in the presence of natural beauty is characteristic, not of the prose writer, but of the poet. This opinion, which cannot have been regarded by Fielding himself as anything but an opportune evasion, he sets forth at length in A Voyage To Lisbon:

Here we passed that cliff of Dover which makes so tremendous a figure in Shakespeare, and which whoever reads without being giddy, must, according to Mr. Addison's observation, have either a very good head or a very bad one; but which, whoever contracts any such ideas from the sight of, must have at least a poetic if not a Shakesperian genius. In truth, mountains, rivers, heroes and gods owe great part of their existence to the poets; and Greece and Italy do so plentifully abound in the former, because they furnish so glorious a number of the latter; who, while they bestowed immortality on every little hillock and blind stream, left the noblest rivers and mountains in the world to share the same obscurity with the eastern and western poets, in which they are celebrated.²

How shall we explain this frequent, tongue-in-the-cheek attitude of Fielding toward descriptive setting? Simply to write it off as exuberant playfulness will not account for his failure to employ setting in places where it is needed to give color to the narrative. Nor can it be accounted for satisfactorily as merely the result of a literary background which was negative toward setting. It is true, to be sure, that, coming directly to novel-writing from a career as a playwright whose

¹Ibid. II:324

²Miscellanies I:243

barbed satire had caused Walpole to invoke the Licensing Act against him, Fielding naturally carried over to the novel much of the technique of the drama. He had had no occasion to develop any extended technique in the use of descriptive setting; as a dramatist his main setting problem had been to set the stage with properties that would suggest a background for action and at the same time provide the objects necessary to the smooth progression of the unfolding of the story on the stage. His early experience as a playwright undoubtedly influenced the cautious and somewhat distrustful attitude he often manifested toward extended descriptive setting. This attitude, moreover, may have been somewhat supported by the fact that in the picaresque pamphlet literature of the past - a literature which influenced him greatly - caricature or lively narrative had been stressed very frequently to the minimization of almost all but the most necessary stage-property type of setting; and when extended artistic setting had been emphasized in that literature by Dekker, the backgrounds and setting-moods had outshone the narrative and made it of secondary importance. These facts alone, however, cannot explain Fielding's frequently-voiced distrust of describing locales in any detail. He knew Mrs Behn's work well, and also that of Defoe and of Addison: he must have seen therein revealed some of the possibilities of descriptive setting to furnish vivid

local color backgrounds, to increase the color of fast moving narrative, and to act as a springboard for characterization. Perhaps he concluded, as well he might, that none of these authors had been highly successful in sustaining, throughout a novel, a constant, vital and dramatic interplay between colorful descriptive setting, episodes of fast-moving narrative, and lively characterization. And he may have felt, as a result, that since his primary bent was toward solving the problem of the structural development of incident and characterization and their dynamic interrelationships, he could not afford to complicate this already perplexing problem by constantly experimenting with a third element which would be sure to make his problem still more complex. He may, then, have adopted his frequent tongue-in-the-cheek attitude toward setting as a playful way of avoiding the additional possibilities for blundering which are inherent in that device. How well he knew the pitfalls inherent in the unskilled use of setting is seen in Tom Jones, where after producing twice as long a description as appears elsewhere in his novels, he remarks pointedly in Scarronic vein:

Reader take care. I have unadvisedly led thee to the top of as high a hill as Mr. Allworthy's, and how to get thee down again without breaking thy neck, I do not know. However, let us e'en venture to slide down together.

And he adds the chapter heading: "The reader's neck brought into danger by a description."¹

¹Tom Jones I:15

This realization of the pitfalls of detailed setting perhaps caused him to adhere, for the most part, to the technique - originating in the drama, and employed more than any other by most previous writers of narrative fiction - of putting out on a bare 'stage' just enough properties to provide the illusion of a 'somewhere' for dramatic action to take place and a collection of objects useful to the actors. Throughout his novels he depends largely on this technique. In Joseph Andrews, for instance, there are only about four settings to which much more than twenty words are devoted; throughout most of that novel the author is content to mention 'Lady Booby's bed', 'Joseph's own garret', 'a gallery which led to an apartment', 'a bench in an inn-yard', 'a narrow lane'; or to rely on the sequence - which he uses over and over - of 'a road, a violent storm, and then an inn with a fire'. Even in the scene where Parson Adams visits Trulliber, Fielding gets vividness with a minimum of setting, mentioning merely a gate and the "pig sty, which was indeed but two steps from his parlour window".¹ Often, moreover, he evades even the mention of locale, remarking perhaps that "the reader must excuse me if I am not particular which way they went."² Professor Cross offers a partial explanation for this evasion when he says:

On the road Fielding wrote as if merely in memory of what he had actually seen. If he recalled the sign of an inn --

¹ Joseph Andrews II:3

² Ibid., II:43

a lion or a dragon -- he gave it; if the sign had slipped from memory, the inn remained forever nameless.¹

But mere failure of memory hardly accounts satisfactorily for his constant evasions.

In his next work of narrative fiction, A Journey From This World To The Next, Fielding shows a greater interest in pictorial description - but only in the first third of the work which is devoted primarily to a descriptive account of the various stopping places on the road to Elysium, and in which there is only a very simple narrative thread with no complexities of plot structure. And even here, though he does get in two effective long pictorial descriptions and is reasonably successful at times in conjuring up convincing atmosphere, he adheres for the most part to his usual method of mere mention of objects or places; and he often avoids a felt need for setting by remarking, for instance, that Elysium is a "happy region no painting of imagination can describe"², or by promising the curious reader a full description of the heavenly coach and then remarking that unfortunately "the work was so extremely fine that it was entirely invisible to the human eye".³ In the final two thirds of the work, where a rapid narrative of Julian's and Ann Boleyn's incarnations is presented, there is an entire absence of descriptive setting.

¹W.L.Cross, The History of Henry Fielding I:342
(New Haven, Yale University Press, 1918)

²Miscellanies I:46-47

³Ibid., I:8

Again in Jonathan Wild, a work probably written about the same time as A Journey From This World To The Next, there is little descriptive setting - less, in fact, than in either of the novels already mentioned. Fielding seems quite content to set the stage by mentioning 'the gaming table and the dice box', 'a night cellar', 'a toy shop', 'a tea-table', 'Newgate' or 'a covert of trees'. There are only two settings at all detailed: the scene some leagues south of Africa, which Mrs Heartfree describes in relating her experiences; and the scene of Wild's execution.¹

In Tom Jones, because of the extent of the work and his maturing art, Fielding makes more and better use of descriptive setting than in any other of his novels. Yet, most of the time, as background for an outdoor scene, he merely mentions 'a narrow lane', 'the thickest part of the furze-brake', 'the side of a little brook', or a place such as Barnet; and adds a touch of weather and time by mentioning 'the dusk of evening', 'a violent storm', 'frost', or most frequently of all 'the moon'. In most of his indoor scenes he is equally sketchy: Allworthy's 'bedroom with pillow' (the only locale for that brilliant scene where the mourners weep by the supposed death-bed of their benefactor, but only because they're enraged that they aren't to get what they consider their

¹Ses footnote #2, page 318; and page 315.

rightful share of his property), Sophia's 'chamber', 'the upper end of the innermost apartment' (locale of the masque ball scene), 'a well furnished and well warmed room' (locale for the two-to-six A.M. after-the-ball tryst of Tom Jones and Lady Bellaston). Even the inns, where most of the action takes place, are generally suggested only by the mention of one or two objects within them - objects which are used over and over: 'the kitchen fire', 'the warm chimney corner', a staircase, a bed, a room, or at slightly more length, 'a door which opened into the parlour or rather a hole with a small window'. In the first three volumes, these sketchy generalized settings are occasionally augmented by a few drawn in somewhat greater detail and used to enhance and further plot or characterization; but in the last volume of 355 pages there is little more extended setting than that picturing Mr Nightengale "in his new lodging, sitting melancholy by the fire."¹

And the same technique is employed in Fielding's last novel Amelia, save that the pictorial scenes become fewer (only five or six), and the separate objects mentioned are even more general; in the average jail scene he is content merely to mention 'ground' or 'corner', in describing an oratorio he merely refers to a 'gallery', in depicting a rout he is content with "an apartment beset with card tables like the rooms at Bath", and in giving the locale for a masquerade

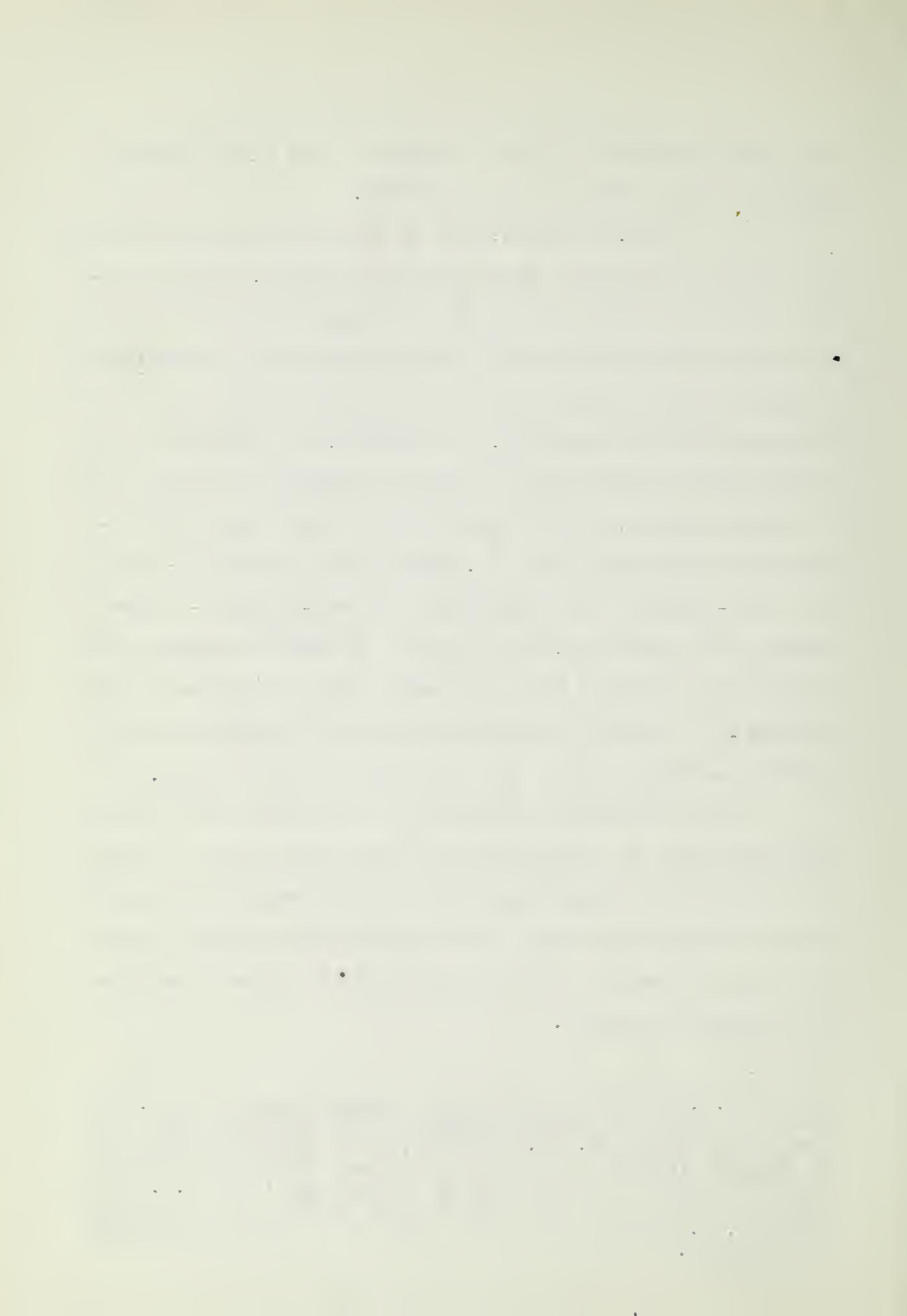
¹Tom Jones IV:21

ball he is satisfied to refer ambiguously to "the upper end of the farthest room on the right hand."

It is true, of course, that Fielding frequently employed, in conjunction with his stage property setting, another technique which had been one of the more common devices of early narrators and which Defoe had almost perfected: he named sufficient actual stopping places on the route taken by his characters to make possible, for instance, the drawing up of a definite and geographically accurate itinerary for Tom Jones or Joseph Andrews, and designated so definite times for arrivals and departures that Mr. Dickson has been able to work out a day-by-day - and sometimes an hour-by-hour - time schedule for Tom Jones, in the course of which he proves that Fielding must have certainly consulted an almanac for his sun and moon.¹ Yet this effective realism is confined to the exacting mention of time and place without description.

From this summary it should be apparent that Fielding generally found it expedient to minimize descriptive settings and thus avoid the perplexing problem of developing technical devices by which setting could be made to contribute to the vivifying of incident and characterization without destroying narrative interest.

¹ W.L. Cross in The History of Henry Fielding, Chap. XIX, section 2, gives a general summary of the work that has been done along this line. Mr. Keightley, in his Life and Writings of Fielding (edited by Dickson; Cleveland, 1907) first attempted reconstruction of the chronology of Tom Jones; and F.S. Dickson continued that work in his "Chronology of Tom Jones", in The Library, pp. 218-224 (July 1917) and in an unpublished Index To Tom Jones.



Specific Techniques in Setting

He was, however, too great a novelist not to be drawn irresistibly to experiment with the dynamite which blows to bits many an embryonically good novel. These experiments are extremely interesting. In some of them he uses the mock-heroic form so that he seems to be mocking both himself and his predecessors in the novel; in others he makes undisguised and straight-forward attempts to develop natural setting technique.

Mock-heroic settings.

In using the mock-heroic form, he followed a custom used by Chettle, and developed as a device for realism by Deloney, Dekker, Head, and Kirkman; but he surpassed even Dekker in his employment of it, and quite probably brought out more artistically than anyone else ever has its inherent possibilities as an aid to realism. His experiments with this form show his skill in utilizing personification toward the production of realism, his vivifying of scene through contrast between setting and action, his direct use of poetic background to enhance a poetic scene, and his use of Gothic machinery to give dramatic force to action.

Out of the nine important mock-heroic settings in his novels, five are marked by direct personification with classical terminology: Aurora, Hesperus, Phoebus, and so forth; and one personifies Morning and Sun by those names. In three of the

six marked by personification, Fielding makes direct realistic use of the personified thing by showing its similarity to characters about to appear.¹ In the first of these, while Thetis puts on the pot for Phoebus' dinner, Hesperus, the heavenly rake, sets an example for the earthly rakes (who, like their heavenly compeer, have slept all day) by calling for his breeches, rubbing his eyes, and preparing himself for his night's adventure - and so the stage is jocularly set for one of Lady Booby's attempts on Joseph's virtue.² In the second, this earthy, human use of personification is continued when Fielding causes the Sun to steal forth from his wife's chamber and pay his addresses to "the beautiful young lady the Morning", who is supposed to be like "Miss - Whoever the reader chooses" - and we are prepared for Wilson to steal forth from his wife's chamber and escort his guests to view the early morning beauty of his simple, unembellished garden.³

¹ It is worth noting that, aside from employing the mock-heroic in this way as a setting device, Fielding also uses it as an aid in refuting the objections of over-critical readers. He reproves those critics who object to the changeableness of Miss Matthews on first meeting Booth by remarking: "We desire such critics to remember that it is the same English climate, in which, on the lovely tenth of June, under a serene sky, the amorous Jacobite, kissing the odoriferous Zephyr's breath, gathers a nosegay of white roses to deck the whiter breast of Celia; and in which, on the eleventh of June, the boisterous Boreas, roused by the hollow thunder, rushes horrible through the air, and, driving the wet tempest before him, levels the hope of the husbandman with the earth, dreadful remembrance of the consequences of the Revolution." (Amelia I:37)

² Joseph Andrews I:31

³ Ibid., II:91

And in the third, the same technique is continued:

The shadows began now to descend larger from the high mountains; the feathered creation had betaken themselves to their rest. Now the highest order of mortals were sitting down to their dinners, and the lowest order to their suppers. In a word, the clock struck five just as Mr Jones took his leave of Gloucester; an hour at which (as it was now mid-winter) the dirty fingers of Night would have drawn her sable curtain over the universe, had not the Moon forbid her, who now, with a face as broad and as red as those of some jolly mortals, who, like her, turn night into day, began to rise from her bed, where she had slumbered away the day, in order to sit up all night.

At this time Tom Jones, certainly a jolly mortal, went forth to moon of love while Partridge, who accompanied him, groaned and complained of the cold.¹

In three other mock-heroic settings, two of which are marked by personification, Fielding uses the setting to vivify the scene by providing contrast between the background and the action - a device which has grown in importance and use since his time. The first of these is as follows:

Aurora now began to show her blooming cheeks over the hills, whilst ten million of feathered songsters, in jocund chorus, repeated odes a thousand times sweeter than those of our laureat, and sung both the day and the song.²

Here Fielding sustains the poetic note, but only to provide contrast with the ensuing scene where Betty and Mr. and Mrs. Tow-wouse engage in a slap-stick argument, as a preface to which Mrs. Tow-wouse threatens to throw a chamber-pot at Betty. The second scene in which he employs such contrast is that in

¹ Tom Jones II:243

² Joseph Andrews I:59

which he provides the poetic tableau of Aurora at her casement - and then rushed on to Jones' discovery of Ensign Northerton attacking Mrs. Waters.¹ The setting for the third scene, where a harshly realistic background is used to heighten the genteel and somewhat poetic grace of the gentle Sophia, follows:

Those members of society who are born to furnish the blessings of life now began to light their candles in order to pursue their daily labours for the use of those who are born to enjoy these blessings.² The sturdy hind now attends the levee of his fellow laborer the ox; the cunning artificer, the diligent mechanic, spring from their hard mattress; and now the bony housemaid begins to repair the disordered drum room while the riotous authors of that disorder, in broken interrupted slumbers, tumble and toss, as if the hardness of down disquieted their repose.³

With this as her background, the sweet Sophia departs from an inn at seven o'clock in the morning.

In only one of the mock-heroic scenes (and this is the final one where personification is used) does Fielding maintain poetic atmosphere solely to enhance and make more delectable his description of human beauty; only once does he approach what Ruskin termed "the pathetic fallacy". Before describing Sophia's beauty, he gives us the following:

Hushed be every ruder breath. May the heathen ruler of the winds confine in iron chains the boisterous limbs of noisy Boreas, and the sharp-pointed nose of bitter-biting Eurus. Do thou, sweet Zephyrus, rising from thy fragrant bed, mount the western sky, and lead on those delicious gales, the charms of which call forth the lovely Flora from her chamber, perfumed with pearly dews, when on the first of June, her birthday, the blooming maid, in loose attire, gently

¹Tom Jones II:324

²This contrast between strata of society is also used in Tom Jones II:243

³Tom Jones III:153

tips it over the verdant mead, where every flower rises to do her homage, till the whole field becomes enameled, and colors contend with sweets which shall ravish her most.¹

Even if we object to pathetic fallacy, we must absolve Fielding, for the form is mock-heroic. And we must admit that he most skillfully and slyly adds the earthy touch of desire so that we will be prepared to be enamoured of what he himself calls the Venus de Medici's beauty of Sophia.

The remaining two mock-heroic settings are especially interesting because they show that before 1753 when in Ferdinand, Count Fathom Smollett made a notable use of Gothic grave-yard scenery, Fielding, possibly following the lead set by Deloney, Dekker, Addison and Richardson, who used such Gothic touches in their narratives, employed grave-yard atmosphere in mock-heroic form to gain dramatic intensification. He uses it first to provide a heightened atmosphere for Mr. Fitzpatrick's barging into an inn at midnight in search of his wife:

Now the little trembling hare, which the dread of all her numerous enemies, and chiefly of that cunning, cruel, and carnivorous animal, man, had confined all the day to her lurking place, sports wantonly o'er the lawns; now on some hollow tree, the owl, shrill chorister of the night, hoots forth notes which might charm the ears of some modern connoisseurs in music; now in the imagination of the half-drunk clown, as he staggers through the churchyard, or rather charnel-yard, to his home, fear paints the bloody hobgoblin; now thieves and ruffians are awake, and honest watchmen fast asleep; in plain English, it was midnight;

¹Tom Jones I:173

and the company at the inn, as well as those who have been already mentioned in this history, as some others who arrived in the evening, were all in bed. Only Susan Chambermaid was now stirring, she being obliged to wash the kitchen before she retired to the arms of the fond expecting hostler.¹

Notice here again that earthy realism is added to prepare the way for the excitement which ensues when Fitzpatrick breaks unannounced into a bedroom where he expects to find his wife; is confronted by a pantless Tom Jones, a heap of petticoats, stockings and garters in disorder on the floor; draws the natural conclusion; is put straight only when Maclacklan - fresh from a reading of Mrs. Behn - rushes in to point out that the lady in bed is Mrs. Waters - not Mrs. Fitzpatrick; and is nearly charged with robbery or rape when Mrs. Waters, to defend her virtue, protests the intrusion on her privacy and is supported by Tom, who apologizes for rushing to her rescue without his pants.

Another, though a shorter, Gothic setting is used to provide atmosphere for the escape of Sophia from her father's house:

Twelve times did the iron register of time beat on the sonorous bell metal, summoning the ghosts to rise and walk their nightly round. In plainer language, it was twelve o'clock, and all the family, as we have said, lay buried in drink and sleep.²

These settings would be interesting if only to prove that Fielding forms another link in the development of the

¹Tom Jones III:27

²Ibid., III:77

Gothic as applied to the novel. But they have added importance in that they show him putting the device to a new use: presenting his grave-yard detail in mock-heroic form, he used the Gothic as a semi-humorous device by which the dramatic value of earthy incidents could be greatly intensified.

Interior Settings

Fielding's earliest, and very nearly his only, use of extended interior setting is to be found in A Journey From This World To The Next; there is none in Joseph Andrews or Jonathan Wild, only one instance in Tom Jones, and none in Amelia. In A Journey there are two interior settings that deserve careful attention, - both of them being in the first section, which, as was pointed out earlier, is more descriptive than narrative. Both reflect the personality of their owner, a use for setting we have already seen employed by Addison and less skillfully by Richardson in Pamela (which, of course, preceded A Journey). The first is of the house of Maladie Alamode¹, located in the City of Diseases, a city endowed by Fielding with a stench like that of the Hague canals in summer and with taverns and brothels such as he had seen many times in the Covent Garden district.² Its description centers in a generalized account of statues and paintings which adorn that lady's "magnificent hall", "painted staircase", and two

¹ Miscellanies I:21-22

² W.L.Cross, op.cit., I:397

"apartments". There is little particularization: we are told of "maimed" bustoes, of "women of such excellent shapes and figures that I should have thought myself in a gallery of beauties had not a certain sallow paleness in their complexions given me a more distasteful idea", and of "figures of old ladies."¹ As a consequence, there is little vividness. This interior, however, does show a definite approach to organic unity of impression. In the second setting, that of the interior of the Palace of Death, there is a more vivid, dominant emotional tone and a finer sense of organic unity - but still rather much generalization; it does, however, show a definite advance in technique:

The outer court was full of soldiers, and, indeed, the whole very much resembled the state of an earthly monarch, only more magnificent. We passed through several courts into a vast hall, which led to a spacious staircase, at the bottom of which stood two pages, with very grave countenances, whom I recollect afterwards to have formerly been very eminent undertakers, and were in reality the only dismal faces I saw there; for this palace, so awful and tremendous without, is all gay and sprightly within; so that we soon lost all those dismal and gloomy ideas we had contracted in approaching it. Indeed, the stately silence maintained among the guards and attendants resembled rather the stately pomp of eastern courts; but there was on every face such symptoms of content and happiness that diffused an air of cheerfulness all round. We ascended the staircase and passed through many noble apartments whose walls were adorned with various battle-pieces in tapestry, and which we spent sometime in observing.... We found the presence chamber at our entrance very full, and a buzz ran through it, as in all assemblies, before the principal figure enters.²

There is considerable skill manifested here in the way Field-

¹Note here the continued use of the portrait-group custom utilized previously by Deloney, Head, and Addison, and to be later employed by Richardson.

²Miscellanies I:26-27

ing uses the details of material existence to reflect the awesomeness of Death as it appears to ~~the~~ average anticipatory mortals, and the cheerful dignity and happiness which Fielding regards as its real characteristics. To thus present conflicting emotionalized concepts in a unified symbolic picture which at the same time seems realistic is an achievement comparable only to some of Bunyan's attempts at the same thing; and Fielding, I believe, surpasses Bunyan at least in the strong sense of life-likeness that he gives the scene.

It is informative to note that after A Journey From This World To The Next, Fielding abandons the technique of reflecting mood or personality in long descriptive interiors. In fact there is only one extended description of interior in the rest of his work, and that is introduced primarily for dramatic purposes. This setting is that of Molly Seagrim's rooms:

The room, or rather garret, in which Molly lay, being up one flight of stairs, that is to say, at the top of the house, was of a sloping figure, resembling the great Delta of the Greeks. The English reader may perhaps form a better idea of it, by being told that it was impossible to stand upright anywhere but in the middle. Now, as this room wanted the conveniency of a closet, Molly had, to supply that defect, nailed up an old rug against the rafters of the house, which enclosed a little hole where her best apparel, such as the remains of that sack which we have formerly mentioned, some caps, and other things with which she had lately provided herself, were hung up and secured from the dust.

This enclosed place exactly fronted the foot of the bed, to which, indeed, the rug hung so near, that it served in a manner to supply the want of curtains.¹

¹Tom Jones I:279

Fielding utilizes every detail of this setting to further the dramatic action. Molly is abed with Square when Tom is heard clambering up the ladder that leads to the garret; she quickly hides Square behind the old rug, so that when Tom enters she is able to assume the pose of a virtuous but wronged woman when he tries to explain why he has not been to see her recently. But the curtain falls; Square, with Molly's nightcap on his head, is discovered squatting ludicrously among Betty's apparel - and Tom is given the opportunity, for which he has been looking, of breaking with Molly and also of laughing at that self-righteous philosopher who has been the source of many of his least pleasant remembrances. The humorous tone which dominates the whole incident is set by the initial touch of setting in which Fielding heightens the earthy realism of the scene by contrasting a formal classical comparison and a simple, every-day explanation; here he once again proves himself a master of the device of contrast to enhance realism in setting.

Fielding's tendency to turn setting to direct narrative use, a tendency exemplified in the preceding example, is evidenced from Tom Jones on, in Fielding's omission of long descriptions and in his substitution of single stage properties which can be utilized for dramatic effect. The best illustration of the latter is the use he makes of mirrors in women's

rooms otherwise almost entirely unfurnished by the novelist.¹ In two of three scenes² where he uses them to reveal the vanity of women (two of whom are ugly), he heightens by that use the dramatic value of his narrative: in the first, by having Mrs Wilkins preen herself for many minutes before answering Allworthy's hurried summons when he finds the foundling, Fielding creates suspense; in the second, when Sophia sees Tom's reflection as she touches herself up before Lady Ballaston's mirror, he produces thereby an element of dramatic surprise - and has Sophia faint in Tom's arms, which in itself furthers the plot.

Regardless of the quickening of narrative interest which may have resulted from this growing minimization of extended exterior setting, it is evident that, in all his novels, and in Amelia especially, Fielding lost much of the colorful localization which aids so greatly in making the reader feel the semblance of reality. The absence of setting in Amelia is especially to be regretted because the success of a novel with an underlying sociological theme is largely dependent upon the ability of the author to create a vivid emotional background strong enough to arouse our pity for the people who move across it. In Amelia, Amelia and Booth are sucked under by the cross-currents of petty vice and poverty; and

¹ As we have seen, the mirror device had already become a tradition in fictional prose. Brewer, Richardson, and Defoe had used it, and Behn and Steele had employed it in modified form, using water instead of glass.

² Tom Jones I:246; I:9; III:327.

hurled occasionally to the surface only to be shoved under again by the calloused hand of a ridiculous debt law, which was profitably utilized by rascals of the underworld at the expense of those already nearly drowned in the sea of social and economic inequality. Yet we are not impressed as much as we should be with the need for reform, for action takes place against relatively colorless backgrounds, so that we do not feel the characteristic emotional tone of the gaming-cellar, the jail room, the ill-furnished dwelling; and we never gain sympathy with the characters because we can never visualize them in any particular locale. It may, however, not seem so strange that Fielding did not take steps to right this weakness in his last novel if we remember that the Elizabethan writers of fictional criminal lives - and even Defoe in Moll Flanders - provided little convincing realistic setting of the type Fielding needed; Fennor and Defoe, it is true, had built up some slight jail atmosphere through setting, but their attempts had not been particularly successful. In Tom Jones, however, Fielding had localized poverty, with some slight success, in a short scene:

She had scarce lain in a week, and there was she in this dreadful weather, in a cold room, without any curtains to her bed, and not a bushel of coal in her house to supply her with fire; her second son lies ill of quincy in the same bed.¹

And an infinitely more able illustration of what might have

¹Tom Jones III:310

been done by setting in Amelia, he had at his command in Richardson's vivid description of Clarissa's prison room. Yet in Amelia where the need is infinitely more great, Fielding neglects the very device which might have made that novel a really effective denunciation of the conditions of his time. In fact, there is only one interior which is pictured in any detail at all; - Booth's prison room in the bailiff's mansion is described as:

....an apartment, the windows of which were well fortified with iron bars, but the walls had not the least outwork raised before them; they were indeed what is generally called naked; the bricks having been only covered with a thin plaster, which in many places was moldered away.¹

If, where interior setting was essential, Fielding failed to use it, we can only conclude that he was baffled by the problem of making it an organic part of his story, as had been most of his predecessors in English fiction.

Exterior Settings

With direct extended exterior setting he was, on occasion, more successful. This phase of his work it is convenient to divide into three sections: his descriptions of buildings and their surroundings, of sea and mob scenes, and of the English countryside in general. As early as 1743 he was successfully experimenting with the depiction of buildings and their surroundings, creating a dominant emotional mood

¹Amelia II:204-05

characteristic of the owner's personality by selecting concrete details and unifying them organically. As we have seen, the possibilities of this technique had been demonstrated by Addison, and Richardson was experimenting with it at about the same time as Fielding. It is interesting to note that in his two effective scenes of this sort, Fielding again utilizes the Gothic. In A Journey From This World To The Next we have the following description of the exterior and surroundings of the Palace of Death, many of the details of which were drawn directly from the palace at Blenheim:

Its outside, indeed, appeared extremely magnificent. Its structure was of the Gothic order; vast beyond imagination, the whole pile consisting of black marble. Rows of immense yews form an amphi-theatre round it of such height and thickness that no ray of sun ever perforates the grove; so that the distant reflection they cast on the palace, which is beautifully gilt with gold on the outside, is inconceivably solemn. To this I may add the hollow murmur of winds constantly heard from the grove, and the very remote sound of roaring waters. Indeed, every circumstance seems to fill the mind with horror and consternation, as we approach to this palace.¹

Here we have a commendable concreteness of form, color, shade, and sound - all blended to produce awe, solemnity, and melancholy, the feelings commonly associated with death (feelings which Fielding points out in his description of the interior of the castle are entirely unfounded). And appropriately enough, many of the details are those characteristic of the Gothic grave-yard note already ably utilized in fictional prose by Deloney, Dekker, Addison, and Richardson, - a note also

¹Miscellanies I:26-27

beginning to be heard extensively in the poetry of Parnell, Blair, Young and Thomson, and later to be utilized in the novel of terror.

Strangely enough, after having employed setting successfully to reflect character in A Journey, Fielding used it thus only once thereafter in fictional¹ writing; this is in Tom Jones where he gives us his longest block description - that of Allworthy's house and grounds:

The Gothic style of building could produce nothing nobler than Mr. Allworthy's house. There was an air of grandeur in it that struck you with awe, and rivaled the beauties of the best Grecian architecture; and it was as commodious within as venerable without.

It stood on the south-east side of a hill, but nearer the bottom than the top of it, so as to be sheltered from the north-east by a grove of old oaks which rose above it in a gradual ascent of near half a mile, and yet high enough to enjoy a most charming prospect of the valley beneath.

In the midst of the grove was a fine lawn, sloping down toward the house, near the summit of which rose a plentiful spring, gushing out of a rock covered with firs, and forming a constant cascade of about thirty feet, not carried down a regular flight of steps, but tumbling in a natural fall over the broken and mossy stones till it came to the bottom of the rock, then running off in a pebbly channel, that with many lesser falls winded along, till it fell into a lake at the foot of the hill, about a quarter of a mile below the house on the south side, and which was seen from every room in the front. Out of this lake, which filled the centre of a beautiful plain, embellished with groups of beeches and elms, and fed with sheep, issued a river, that for several miles was seen to meander through an amazing variety of meadows and woods till it emptied itself into the sea, with a large arm of which, and an island beyond it, the prospect was closed.

On the right of the valley opened another of less extent, adorned with pleasant villages, and terminated by one of

¹ However, in his essays in the Covent-Garden Journal (for instance, that for April 23, 1752) and in A Voyage To Lisbon, his last (non-fictional) work, he makes good use of the same technique: see his description of the town of Ryde (Misc. L: 280-281) and of Lisbon (Misc. I: 356).

the towers of an old ruined abby, grown over with ivy, and part of the front, which remained still entire.

The left hand scene presented the view of a very fine park, composed of very unequal ground, and agreeably varied with all the diversity that hills, lawns, wood, and water, laid out with admirable taste, but owing less to art than to nature, could give. Beyond this, the country gradually rose into a ridge of wild mountains, the tops of which were above the clouds.¹

As Professor Cross points out, this is an exacting, detailed description of the view from Tor Hill, northeast of Glastonbury, to which Fielding adds the artificial cascades and lake of Allen S. Prior Park and the Gothic style building of Radway Grange.² Here again we have an occasional Gothic touch, and an organic unification of complex concrete detail reflecting the diversity of interest, the gentleness, the nobility, and the idealism of Allworthy himself. Indeed, though, as is to be expected, there is more generalization and less concentration than in Tennyson's descriptions of landscape in The Palace of Art, the scene reminds us at times of that later, more skillful effort. And in its descriptive smoothness, and even in its slight organic utilization, it far surpasses Richardson's somewhat later attempt at the same thing in his description of Sir Charles Grandison's estate. Despite Fielding's relative success, however, he abandoned this technique entirely, and omitted thereafter³ mood-descriptions of houses and grounds.

¹ Tom Jones I:13-15

² W.L. Cross, op.cit., II:166

³ Cross' (op.cit., II:166) conjecture that Fielding purposely omitted description of dwellings of unpraiseworthy characters such as Squire Western in order to prevent embarrassing identification is interesting, but hardly explains Fielding's general avoidance of detailed description of locale.

One reason for this, as he himself indicated at the end of his description of Allworthy's estate, is his well justified feeling that such setting got in the way of the narrative interest. It evidently did not occur to him that such a scene might be blended into a novel a little at a time instead of being used as a block background.

He did, however, succeed in building vivid atmosphere by blending his setting into the narrative action in two scenes which, in themselves, are notable examples of special phases of his use of setting : mob background and sea background. In relating the dramatic death of Jonathan Wild, he creates a colorful background by treating grouped crowds as part of his setting - a technique which has since been employed freely and successfully in fiction and which is one of the movie scenario writer's chief supports. A partial quotation follows:

He ascended the cart, where he was no sooner seated than he received the acclamations of the multitude, who were highly ravished with his Greatness.

The cart now slowly moved on, being preceded by a troop of horse guards bearing javelins in their hands, through streets lined with crowds all admiring the great behavior of our hero, who rode on, sometimes sighing, sometimes singing or whistling, as his humor varied....

There were not wanting some who maligned this completion of his glory, which was now about to be fulfilled to our hero, and endeavored to prevent it by knocking him on the head as he stood under the tree, while the ordinary was performing his last office. They therefore began to batter the cart with stones, brick-bats, dirt, and all manner of mischievous weapons, some of which erroneously playing on the robes of the ecclesiastic, made him so expeditious in his repetition, that with wonderful alacrity he had ended almost in an instant, and conveyed himself into a place of safety in the hackney-coach....¹

¹Jonathan Wild, pp. 283-285

Fielding's superiority to Defoe in scenes of this sort may be seen by comparing the scene just quoted with the following one from Defoe's Jonathan Wild:

....he had little to do but to stand up in the Cart, and the needful Apparatus being made, be turn'd off with the rest, which was done about 3 a-Clock in the Afternoon.

The rudeness of the mob to him, both at his first going into the cart, and all the Way from thence to the Place of Execution, is not to be express'd, and shews how notorious his Life had been and what Impression his known Villanies had made on the Minds of the People; for contrary to the general Behavior of the Street in such Cases, instead of compassionate Expressions, and a great Cast of Pity which ordinarily sits on the Countenances of the People when they see the miserable Objects of Justice go to their Execution; here was nothing to be heard but Cursings and Execrations; abhorring the Crimes and the very Name of the Man, throwing Stones and Dirt at him all the Way, and even at the Place of Execution; the other Malefactors being all ready to be turned off, but the Hangman giving him leave to take his own Time, and he continuing setting down in the Cart, the Mob impatient, and fearing a Reprieve, tho' they had no Occasion for it, call'd furiously upon the Hangman to dispatch him, and at last threatened to tear him to pieces, if he did not tye him up immediately.¹

Fielding makes a much more dramatic and less expository use of mob detail than does Defoe. But despite Fielding's success in using mob action to create a vivid background for Wild's execution, there is no other extended scene of this type in his works.

A second scene where narrative and setting become well blended is a most interesting experiment in the creation of sea atmosphere. Perhaps Fielding was influenced by the color which sea background gives to Smollett's Roderick Random (1748)

¹Defoe's Works IV:274

However that may be, he certainly was acquainted with some of Defoe's excellent utilization of sea atmosphere, and it is just possible that, being a reader of picaresque literature, he also knew of Head and Kirkman's utilization of sea atmosphere in The English Rogue. At any rate, the most vivid setting in Amelia (1751) is certainly the following description of a storm at sea:

At length, we embarked aboard a transport, and sailed for Gibralter; but the wind, which was at first fair, soon chopped about; so that we were obliged, for several days, to beat to windward, as the sea phrase is.... We rolled up and down in a little narrow cabin, in which were three officers, all of us extremely sea-sick; our sea-sickness being much aggravated by the motion of the ship, by the view of each other, and by the stench of the men. But this was but a little taste indeed of the misery which was to follow; for we were got about six leagues to the westward of Scilly, when a violent storm rose at north-east, which soon raised the waves to the height of mountains. The horror of this is not to be actually described to those who have never seen the like. The storm began in the evening, and as the clouds brought on the night apace, it was soon entirely dark; nor had we, during many hours, any other light than what was caused by the jarring elements, which frequently sent forth flashes, or rather streams of fire; and whilst these presented the most dreadful objects to our eyes, the roaring of the winds, the dashing of ~~a~~ waves against the ship and each other, formed a sound altogether as horrible for our ears; while our ship, sometimes lifted up, as it were, to the skies, and sometimes swept away at once into the lowest abyss, seemed to be the sport of the winds and the seas.¹

And Fielding makes this even more vivid by a description of a loaded life-boat launched only to be "swallowed up by the merciless waves", and of dead-drunk sailors carousing, insensible

¹ Amelia I:147ff

to peril. Here, and in one other non-fictional work of his¹, we have most effective utilization of the sea to provide realistic atmosphere.

No discussion of Fielding's use of exterior setting would be complete without some analysis of his descriptions of English gardens and the English countryside.² His detailed depiction of the Allworthy estate, previously quoted, illustrates the exception rather than the rule of his practice. Generally, in the course of his narration, he is content to mention ditches, lanes, meadows and orchards, occasionally adding some such adjective as green or spreading. By stringing these objects together, however, he frequently creates an illusion of reality, as in the following selection:

....they saw afar off several lights scattered at a small distance from one another, and at the same time found themselves on the descent of a very steep hill [which the parson rolled down]they moved forwards to where the nearest light presented itself; and, having crossed a common field, they came to a meadow where they seemed to be at a very little distance from the light, when to their grief they arrived at the banks of a river. [Having surmounted this obstacle by finding a bridge] they passed over two meadows,³ and came to a little orchard, which led them to a house.

At rare intervals, moreover, he is slightly more distinctive, adding to the narrative a few more descriptive phrases without at all impeding the action:

¹"Voyage To Lisbon", Miscellanies I:327

²His most interesting fictional description of country outside of England is that of tribal life "south of Africa" as seen by Mrs Hartfree. The setting, though bare and largely expository, gives details of huts and tribal customs reminiscent of those in Mrs Behn's Oroonoko. (Jonathan Wild, pp.249-66)

³Joseph Andrews II:46-48

At the corner of a garden wall, a female voice, in a whisper, cried out, 'Mr. Booth'.... I now lifted Amelia over the gate, and jumping after, we crept along together by the side of a hedge, a different way from what led to the town. By these means we luckily made our escape, and clambering over hedge and ditch, my Amelia performing the part of a heroine all the way, we at length arrived at a little green lane, where stood a vast spreading oak, under which we sheltered ourselves from a violent storm. When this was over and the moon began to appear, Amelia declared that she knew very well where she was; and a little farther, striking into another lane to the right, she said that would lead us to a house where we should be both safe and unsuspected. I followed her directions, and we at length came to a little cottage about three miles distant from Mrs Harris's house.

As it now rained very violently, we entered this cottage, in which we espied a light, without any ceremony. Here we found an old woman sitting by the fire.¹

And sometimes, but with diminishing frequency after Joseph Andrews, Fielding tucks in a scene with fair unity of impression and touches of concreteness. For instance, in describing Wilson's garden, he says:

No parterres, no fountains, no statues embellished this little garden. Its only ornament was a short walk, shaded on each side by a filbert hedge, with a small alcove at one end.²

Or in describing a romantic background for a lovers' lunch party, he remarks:

They came to one of the beautifullest spots of ground in the universe. It was a kind of natural amphi-theatre, formed by the winding of a small rivulet, which was planted with thick woods, and the trees rose gradually above each other by the natural ascent of the ground they stood on; which ascent, as they hid with their boughs, they seemed to have been disposed by the design of the most skillful painter. The soil was spread with a verdure which no painter could imitate, and the whole place might have raised

¹Amelia I:103-104

²Joseph Andrews II:91-92

romantic ideas in elder minds than those of Joseph and Fanny, without the assistance of love.¹

But even where, as here, there is unity of impression, it is generally spoiled, as this is, by evasive generalizations.

Even after adding to the scenes just discussed those more fragmentary details of local color which we shall soon see Fielding utilizing for dramatic effect, I can still see no sound basis for Cross' assertion that "Fielding, in a tentative way, indicated the place that nature might occupy in the novel" - a statement that seems just as fallacious as his totally unwarranted observation that, before Fielding, localization of scene did not trouble the story teller or his reader, and that "Arcadia would do".²

Fielding, however, compensated somewhat for his frequent lack of sustained, colorful out-door setting by effectively utilizing rather fragmentary backgrounds in the production of dramatic effects. In the following scene, for instance, he uses background quite effectively to emphasize the modesty of Sophia, who had just fallen from her horse:

The lane which they were then passing was narrow, and very much overgrown with trees, so that the moon could here afford very little light, and was moreover, at present, so obscured in a cloud, that it was almost perfectly dark. By these means the young lady's modesty, which was extremely delicate, escaped as free from injury as her limbs.³

At other times, he heightens and makes more probable the emo-

¹Ibid., II:102

²W.C. Cross, The Development of the English Novel, pp. 46-47. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1919)

³Tom Jones III:97

tional reactions of his characters by using a recurrent locale, a device which already had been utilized by his contemporary, Richardson. When, for instance, there is to occur an attempted reconciliation between Sophia and Tom, after the latter's affair with Molly, Fielding puts his characters "in the garden at the end of two walks which were both bounded by that canal in which Jones had formerly risked drowning to retrieve the little bird that Sophia had lost"¹; he thus utilizes the emotional tones and overtones which have been attached to a locale by former happenings there to produce a convincing reason for present emotional response. And he uses the device of recurrent locale, even more successfully, to accentuate the contrast between moods of the same character. For instance, striking a half-facetious, over-lush note, he describes how, on a "pleasant evening in the latter end of June", Tom "was walking in a most delicious grove, where the gentle breezes fanning the leaves, together with the sweet trilling of a murmuring stream, and the melodious notes of nightingales, formed together the most enchanting harmony." Tom then throws himself down by the stream, and soliloquizes mooningly on the beauty of Sophia. But into this touching scene Fielding thrusts Molly, dressed in coarse shift, shoulering a pitchfork, and exuding "some odoriferous effluvia" - and Tom, abandoning his unprofitable poetics, retires with

¹Tom Jones I:292

her to the bushes.¹ So the romantic background becomes a foil for a coarse realism. And a little later, when Tom and Molly are discovered by Thwackum and Blifil, and Sophia faints at the revelation, Fielding brings Tom (and Sophia!) back to their senses by having Tom realize her preciousness as he carries her in his arms to the stream, where he sprinkles her with its water. And here Fielding reveals his whole attitude toward the problem of setting, for he remarks:

This stream did not come there as such streams flow through vulgar romances, with no other purpose than to murmur. No! Fortune had decreed to enoble the little brook with a higher honor than any of those which wash the plains of Arcadia ever deserved.²

Nothing is more true than that, throughout his novels, Fielding, playing the part of fortune, strives to utilize setting - when he employs it at all - to advance characterization or incident, and avoids even the most desirable color of background when it appears to him that in using it he will retard or make heavy his narrative, or slow down the vital, dynamic interplay between incident and characterization.

Conclusion

Though frequently distrustful of setting, cautious in the employment of it, and depending to a great extent on the stage-property device, Fielding, as we have seen, made important contributions to the development of setting technique.

¹Ibid., I:319-320

²Ibid., I:331

Perhaps most significant is his use of contrast or comparison, through setting, to intensify the earthiness and realism of his narrative and of his characters. This he accomplished in several ways. First, using the mock-heroic form, he intensified the realism of his work by personifying the constellations, night, day, and dawn; and then either attributing to them earthy actions similar to those his own characters were about to perform, or describing them poetically to afford a sharp contrast to the earthy realism of the ensuing scene, or comparing their beauty to the beauty of mortals so as to render the mortals more desirable. Secondly, also using the heroic style, he mockingly described the time of day through painting, in language resonant with false dignity, those activities of animals and common people which are characteristic of a given hour - and then suddenly described, in the simplest language, a most humble human action, and proceeded to the narration of a rollicking, earthy episode; in several instances, moreover, he combined the mock-heroic style with Gothic grave-yard detail in order to heighten still further the contrast with the simple and earthy. It is, then, not too much to say that Fielding turned the previously developed mock-heroic and Gothic devices to new uses, and brought the mock-heroic to its highest utility as a tool for intensifying realism. In addition to using setting as a device for producing contrast with, and so intensifying, the ensuing drama, Fielding at times seized upon it as a tool

for characterization. He employed both interior and exterior settings to reflect traits of character, adopting the general technique developed by Addison and Richardson; he was, at times, however, more successful than either of them in the degree of smoothness and compactness which he attained in such descriptions, though hardly as successful as they were in revealing distinctive character traits by this method. And he rivalled and at times surpassed Bunyan in describing, realistically, scenes symbolic of a state of mind. He also skillfully utilized recurrent locale to heighten and contrast different moods of the same character, and to make more convincing the emotional reaction of his characters, - the latter being a device carried to a fuller use by Richardson. In addition to using setting as an aid to characterization, Fielding made direct, organic, narrative use of it. He produced valuable examples of how stage-properties may be utilized to create surprise and suspense, and so produce and heighten dramatic effect in narrative. Though he did it infrequently, he occasionally blended settings, such as those of the sea and of mob color, into a fast moving narrative in such a way as to add color to it without impeding it. And while his description of the English countryside is not extensive, he frequently worked in sufficient linked detail drawn from it to produce an illusion of actuality. It has been shown, then, that Fielding, when he did

experiment with setting, stressed its organic involvement with incident and characterization, providing some notable illustrations of how that important problem may be solved. Had Fielding done nothing else, he would deserve considerable credit for emphasizing the desirability of dynamic inter-relation between setting, plot, and characterization, and for warning future novelists, at least by omission and implication, of the dangers of introducing setting haphazardly.

XII

CONCLUSION

Before closing, it seems desirable to note that among the writers from 1550 through Fielding certain special devices were employed to an extent which made them almost traditional. Among bare stage properties, for instance, the mirror was favored as a device for heightening drama; Brewer, Defoe, Richardson and Fielding employed it, and Behn and Steele employed adaptations of it, using water instead of the common glass to catch reflections. The picture-set custom was also utilized, with considerable frequency, as a means of heightening drama, eliciting a reaction indicative of character traits or reflecting such traits: Deloney, Head, Addison, Richardson and Fielding all employ it. Heroic setting, often given a humorous twist, and made to serve as a tool for increasing realism through contrast, was used by Chettle, Dekker, Fennor, Head and Kirkman, and brought to a high perfection by Fielding. And Gothic grave-yard detail which has ever since continued to be an oft-favored device of diverse types of novelists, was utilized as a means of creating mood or heightening the dramatic by Deloney, Dekker, Addison, Richardson and Fielding.

We have seen, in the course of this study, how realistic setting, utilized infrequently and in the most fragmentary form by the early pamphleteers, became in the hands of successive writers an important tool of many uses in increas-

ing the reader's faith in the probability of narrative action and characterization, and in heightening the novel as a whole. The specific achievement of each major author has been summarized in detail at the end of the section devoted to his work. Certain general trends are now apparent. From the early pamphleteers through Fielding there was a general reliance on the device of stage property setting: the inclusion of only those items of bare setting essential to the smooth working out of the narrative action. As the novel became a more sharply defined type and as novelists became more skillful, this basic technique was greatly augmented by other setting techniques, but was never superceded. Along with it developed the common device of employing actual place names; starting among the pamphleteers, this gradually became a more and more important technique and was used with such minute care by Defoe and Fielding that an actual itinerary can frequently be plotted for their heroes--a further aid to increasing the probability of the narrative. As writers found the need for more descriptive setting, history, tradition and travel-books, as well as personal experience, became sources for colorful setting. The possibilities of the employment of distinctive local color on a fairly large scale, first realized by Deloney, were explored rather fully by Behn and Defoe, and distinctive local color never thereafter went entirely neglected. Along with the growing interest in extended distinctive setting there developed a growing interest in the possibilities of its being

utilized as a dynamic force in plot progression and in characterization. Progress here was slow. Early authors found the problem of vital fusion and interaction of plot and distinctive setting difficult; even Head, Behn and Defoe experimented with it with infrequent success: Richardson struggled with it at times more successfully, but capitalized on only a small part of its possibilities, though he did develop a technique of building up extended setting gradually, thus preparing the way for a highly unified emotionalized fusion of fairly extensive setting and dramatic action, each largely dependent on the other; and Fielding fell below his great contemporary in his success in solving the problem of introducing a fairly detailed distinctive setting which would interact with the plot without impeding the action. Progress in the dynamic interrelation of distinctive setting and characterization was equally slow. Though Greene once at an early date by chance revealed part of its possibilities, though Deloney and Defoe made inept attempts to show character influenced by and reacting to setting, Addison and Steele were really the first to show how any extended use could be made of descriptive setting as a means to vital characterization, and Mrs. Rowe worked on the problem with occasional success--but Addison, Steele, and Rowe, working up short sketches only, could only suggest means of employing setting in characterization in an extended narrative of the novel type: their experiments were uncomplicated by the more complex problems of the full-length novel writer; Richardson

and Fielding taking the suggestion from their predecessors, both experimented with the Addisonian method of characterization through setting, but no one could call them eminently successful therein. To future writers, then, was left the problem of refining the imperfect methods of their predecessors and of inventing new techniques for realizing the full possibilities of distinctive descriptive setting as a vital aid to plot and characterization.

APPENDIX

The Followers of Mrs. Behn

As was remarked in the text¹, Mrs. Mary Manley and Mrs. Eliza Haywood claimed to be realists, following in the footsteps of Mrs. Behn. A study of their works, however, shows that their realism was confined almost entirely to the purveyance of choice bits of scandal concerning certain of their supposedly notorious contemporaries, several of whom they assumed would be recognized by readers, though appearing in the stories under fictitious names. The settings, far from being realistic, are probably their authors' best protection **against** charges of libel.

Though in the preface to Queen Zarah, a work generally attributed to Mrs. Manley, the writer observes that the authors of historical novels (for so Manley and Haywood called themselves) "ought with great Care to observe the Probability of Truth, which consists in saying nothing but what may be morally believed"², she rarely took her own advice. In the work just referred to, her incidents outromance Mrs. Behn's at her most romantic; and the sole significant setting of that work certainly does not tend toward probability:

....it Clelia's apartment at the Court was very spacious, and made on purpose for a Cooling Room in the Heats of

¹See page 146

²The Secret History of Queen Zarah and The Zarazians, p., A3-4 (Printed in the Year 1705)

Summer, and had in it several Beds of Turf very prettily made, with Pots of Jessamine Flowers, and other Sweets all about.¹

The setting here seems pseudo-tropical-oriental-southern-European - somewhat in keeping with the wild, impossible intrigues which occur therein. There is nothing convincing about the book, even though the author, in order to ward off the charge that she was satirizing the Duchess of Marlborough, felt it necessary to protest, in the preface to Part Two, that the whole story is a fiction and not a history of modern conditions.

In her New Atalantis Mrs. Manley continues to relate erotic intrigue, this time supposedly satirizing the adventures of the Duke of Marlborough. In this book Astraea revisits earth "to see if Humankind is still as defective as when she, in Disgust, forsook it"² - and spends most of her time observing the wildly erotic amours of Fortunatus (Duke of Marlborough) and his companions. Disguising England as a cliff-bound island in the Mediterranean Sea, Manley gives us lush settings for eroticism. For instance, she relates what the Duchess saw as she entered the Duke's bed-chamber:

The Weather being then violently hot, the Umbrelloes were let down from behind the Windows, the Sashes open, whence the Jessamine, that cover'd 'em, blew in with a Fragrancy. Tuberoses, set in pretty Gilt and China Pots, were plac'd

¹Ibid., I:13

²Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality of Both Sexes. From the New Atalantis, An Island in the Mediterranean, pp.1-2 (London: J. Watson, 1726; fifth edition)

advantageously upon Stands; the Curtains of the Bed drawn back to the Canopy made of yellow Velvet, embroider'd with white Bugles, and the Pannels of the Chamber were Looking-Glass. Upon the Bed was strew'd, with a lavish Profuseness, plenty of Orange and Lemon Flowers; and to complete the Scene, the young Germanicus in a Dress and Posture not very decent to describe.¹

After Mrs. Manley has described the dress and posture "not very decent to describe", she has the Duchess throw herself on the bed and kiss the unrecognized Germanicus, who, awaking from pretended sleep, enjoys her. Manley goes on to give us all the detail of how Germanicus "grasped her to his ravished Bosom" and how the Duchess, awaking from "an amorous lethargy" upon hearing a voice other than the Duke's and upon receiving "stifling" kisses, "darted back his kisses and returned his pressure." Later, as pre-arranged by Germanicus and Fortunatus, Fortunatus discovers the lovers, and has a good excuse for throwing aside the Duchess for a new mistress. This sort of thing goes on for four volumes.

In her History of Rivella (supposedly autobiographical) and in Bath Intrigues, Mrs. Manley is at times slightly more realistic in setting, but still unconvincing. The most probable setting in either book is the one giving the background for the relation of the life of Rivella:

On One of those fine Evenings that are so rarely to be found in England, the Young Chevalier D'Aumont, related to the Duke of that name, was taking the Air in Somerset-House-Garden, and enjoying the cool Breeze from the River;

¹Ibid., I:33-34

which after the hottest Day that had been known that Summer, prov'd very refreshing. He had made an Intimacy with Sir Charles Lovemore, a person of admirable good Sense and Knowledge, and who was now walking in the Garden with him, when D'Aumont leaning over the Wall, pleas'd with observing the Rays of the Setting Sun upon the Thames, chang'd the Discourse....¹

D'Aumont mentions Rivella, and Lovemore gives her history, as it is known intimately to him. In the story proper, however, the only touches of realistic setting are the mention of upper "Hyde Park near the Lodge"² and the observation that, to keep assignation, Rivella went "early in the morning....to Westminster Hall....and took up her post at the Booksellers-Shop, by the Foot of those Stairs which go up to Parliament House."³ Had Mrs. Manley given us more of this sort of setting, she might have gained some realism of locale, but not enough to make realistic her super-intrigue. As it was, however, she did not do so; after depending on generic place names throughout the story, she concluded by having Lovemore observe that, had he the time, he could carry D'Aumont

....(in the Heat of Summer after Dinner) within the Nymphs Alcove, to a Bed nicely sheeted and strow'd with Roses, Jessamins or Orange-Flowers, suited to the variety of the Season; her Pillows neatly trim'd with Lace or Muslin, stuck round with Junquils, or natural garden Sweets, for she uses no perfumes.⁴

So she ends the History of Rivella on a romantic-erotic touch.

The four letters comprising her Bath Intrigues are a little less unbelievable in their incidents of scandal, but are

¹The Adventures of Rivella; or, The History of the Author of the Atalantis pp.1-2 (London, 1714)

²Ibid., p.97

³Ibid., p.69

⁴Ibid., final page.

flat and uninteresting; and the settings are insufficient to add color to the stories. Mention is made of the post-house and of a field a mile distant from Bath; but generally Mrs. Manley is content to refer to "the House they had agreed on for completing their amour", "the house of a certain great Lady not far from Bath", or a little arbour in a garden.

Mrs. Eliza Haywood, employing the same type of incident as Mrs. Manley used in Queen Zarah and The New Atalantis, is generally content with generic setting : city, room, hospital, country-seat. In her Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to Utopia, a heavenly guide brings a visitor from Utopia to see the sights and learn of all the vices that flourish in high places. Mrs. Haywood's only attempt at descriptive setting is her unconvincing portrayal of locales of royalty, where she had the chance to follow Mrs. Manley in her fondness for the richness of the East. She mentions spacious streets, gilded palisades, crystal turrets, and a canopy of crimson velvet richly embossed with gold. What she evidently meant to have taken for the residence of an English nobleman, she describes in the following words:

A Palace more dazzling than ever the most luxurious Fancy presented to the inventive Brain! - The choicest riches of East adorn'd each pompous Room - The high-arch'd Cielings with glittering brightness seemed to disclose another

Heaven! - The crystal Portals, swinging on golden Hinges, were pannell'd with Emeralds, Topaz's, and the blushing Ruby, whose blended Lustre, by refraction doubled, ever pain'd the Eye that gaz'd upon it! The marble Floors were cover'd over with richest Tapestry, in which was curiosly interwoven the various Histories of each different Age from Time's first Eera! - On Agate Tables stood Jasper Jars, fill'd with Perfumes, such as Devotion offers to the Gods! - To charm the Ear, unseen Musicians tuned their various Instruments with sphere-like Harmony.¹

Such royal estates are the locales for unbelievable bed-chamber melodramas. Indeed, the nearest Mrs. Haywood gets to reality in setting is her observation concerning a magnificent palace (she may have had St James's in mind) which was "situated on rising ground" and had "the command of one of the finest Rivers in the Universe" and great beauty "of its Prospect."²

From what has been said, then, it should be evident that Mrs. Manley and Mrs. Haywood deserve no place of any significance whatever in the history of realistic setting.

¹Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia, II:13 (London, 1725)

²Ibid., II:125

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REALISTIC DESCRIPTIVE SETTING IN
ENGLISH FICTION FROM 1550
THROUGH FIELDING

Abstract of a Dissertation

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Considering setting realistic to the extent that it imparts to the reader a feeling that there is a strong probability of its being capable of existence in the world as constituted, this investigation traces the development of the use of true-seeming setting from 1550 through the work of Fielding. The method used was to study the extent of such setting as employed by the authors of the period covered, the sources of that setting, the techniques employed in using it as background or as a device for characterization or furtherance of the narrative action, and the extent to which it makes the story of which it is a part more probable to the reader than that story would otherwise be.

An examination of pamphleteer literature before 1600 revealed that the pamphleteers used very little setting, preferring to stress bare but lively narrative and earieature. When they employed setting, however, they did so primarily because it was essential to dramatic action to place certain items of setting in certain places, as one would place stage properties, in order to provide a means for working out the narrative action smoothly; or because of interest to be gained by appealing to the public curiosity concerning unfamiliar milieu. Such early pamphleteers as Thomas Harmon and Gilbert Walker employed setting, without any great effectiveness, for these purposes; their mere mention of familiar properties, however, lent a slight touch of probability to their stories of rogues and vagabonds; and their descriptions of the distinctive customs of such vagabonds occasionally provided a sketch of colorful locale peculiar to vagabond life, a sketch which lent color to, and provided a probable background for, their escapades. Robert Greene made a more circumstantial use of the stage-property type of setting, providing a rather minutely worked-out locale employed in and essential to the action, and so affording narrative probability. Henry Chettle and the unknown author of *The Defence of Conny-Catching* made a further advance by employing the "stage property" technique to add dramatic vitality to fabliau-type stories, utilizing bare items of setting in the narrative action in such a way as to provide localization essential to dramatic action and valuable in intensifying it. Chettle, moreover, once used setting as a background for the explanation of the origin of a series of stories, and also combined heroic personification with simple realistic detail of locale—a device used by later authors. The most exceptional use of setting by the early pamphleteers was probably Greene's perhaps accidental use of it to create a mood productive of change in character.

In *Jack Wilton* (1594) Thomas Nashe created our first unified realistic novel. Giving his story an historical background, Nashe bolsters reader-faith in the probability of his hero's occasionally ultra-sensational escapades by skillfully utilizing setting detail of actual sieges and military campaigns, to whose general historical background he adheres at least in the total impression he conveys of them; by employing probable and sometimes detailed setting for purportedly historical adventures in actual continental cities, and mixing in actual historical detail of locale; and by using convincing plague setting to create a mood to make more probable sensational character action. Though sometimes carrying the reader to the verge of disbelief, he frequently swings him back toward belief in the probability of the series of events by choosing the psychological moment to introduce details of setting convincing in their realism. So Nashe showed the value of realistic setting in increasing the reader's belief in the probability of plot detail, and pointed the way for Scott, Stevenson, and the historical romaneers, who made romance convincing by mixing it with a liberal quantity of realism.

In his guild novels, written between 1597 and 1599, Thomas Deloney proved himself our first significant local-color novelist by painstakingly detailing the distinctive backgrounds of guild life in England. Occasionally, as Nashe had done before him, he used actual settings of historical incidents, employing them more organically, if less spectacularly, than Nashe. He was the first to tap an almost inexhaustible source of the picturesque, utilizing local customs and traditions in his narratives. His accuracy in local topographical detail and linked place names added a further touch of verisimilitude, as well as making him an important forerunner of Defoe and Fielding. He was, moreover, the first to employ successfully Gothic "grave yard" detail as a means of intensifying realistic dramatic episodes; and he continued and improved the application of the heroic in juxtaposition to the commonplace as a device for emphasizing realism. Finally, while he failed to capitalize on its possibilities, he revealed the inherent value of setting as a means of motivating plot and producing changes in character attitudes. Through his varied use of colorful setting, he left the reader no doubt as to the overwhelming probability of his narratives.

While between 1600 and 1660 realistic narrative prose fiction declined, in general, in both quantity and technique, Thomas Dekker utilized, in his pamphlets, the full richness of sensory detail, producing a highly unified impression and a dominant emotional tone which, for the first time, really put the reader of realistic prose in the mood to feel with the fictional characters. His technique in pure description was unsurpassed by anyone within the scope of this study; but he only rarely used setting organically to influence action or character directly, employing it primarily as background. He continued the use of mock-heroic combined with realistic setting, giving the whole a humorous twist and greatly increasing realism thereby; this device he brought to its highest perfection before Fielding. And he surpassed Deloney in intensifying mood through the use of Gothic graveyard detail, though he never achieved the latter's organic-dramatic employment of it within the narrative; and was superior to Chettle in using setting to form an artistic framework explanatory of the origin of a series of stories.

Of the other pamphleteers of the period, William Fennor described prison setting more atmospherically than either Defoe or Fielding, and, incidentally, continued the semi-humorous employment of heroic setting. And Thomas Brewer utilized folk-tale backgrounds in his settings, and made highly dramatic use of the "stage property" type.

Just after the Restoration, Richard Head, despite the poor quality of most of *The English Rogue*, made the first vivid utilization of Irish local-color. Even more important were his employment of travel-book local-color for the first time in realistic prose fiction; and his occasional utilization of such material, and of storm atmosphere, to form part of, and to heighten, fast-moving narrative. His continuator, Francis Kirkman, introduced numerous nautical measurements, details of the weather, and so forth, to give added credibility to his narrative, a trick on which Defoe later capitalized.

Though her novels are generally a mixture of the realistic and the romantic, Mrs. Aphra Behn added probability to her works by mentioning actual place names, and by employing rich local-color drawn from her experience and reinforced by travel-book detail. Although in her handling of the English scene she showed no advance over her predecessors except perhaps by introducing a few touches of rural background, her Antwerp, and more

particularly her Dutch Guiana scenes, afford vivid, detailed local-color, which, however,—particularly when it is most convincing—is employed largely as background and not organically utilized in action or characterization. The local color method she first successfully employed in the extensive depiction of a foreign scene. While she was not always accurate and while she was inclined to romanticize her locales slightly, her best settings are convincingly probable and lend great realism to the narrative.

Mrs. Behn's contemporary, John Bunyan, made an entirely different use of realistic setting detail. He employed details of Bedfordshire to anchor his allegory in English life. Generally, his realistic detail, extensive as it sometimes is, does not create verisimilitude of scene: it is only a means of adding a certain plausibility to otherwisc improbable settings and incidents. Bunyan did, however, give reality, at times, to place names symbolic of human experience by attaching to them concrete detail drawn almost entirely from actual places; and he painted realistic pictures of spiritual concepts and states of mind by using the technique of the modern expressionist, and expressing them through concrete images symbolic, in combination, of those states.

Our first important pioneers in the extended application of setting to the art of characterization, Addison and Steele, revealed character traits by showing, in detail, an individual's reaction to his distinctive environment. In doing so, they vividly sketched the England of the country-squire and interrelated it with characterization and plot to form an organic whole, achieving a more vital fusion of the three elements of novel structure than anyone before them.

Daniel Defoe made a more extensive use of setting than anyone else within the scope of this study. Developing the circumstantial method of linking actual groups of setting-facts in an unbroken, logical chain, and thus creating almost absolute verisimilitude, he far outdistanced Mrs. Behn in using local color drawn from travel-books and life. Though sometimes content to link real place names with fragmentary descriptive touches, he carefully studied source materials, and employed detail geographically accurate. Following the precedent set by Nashe, he depicted, with greater authenticity, the settings of historical military actions. He also pictured, for the first time in prose fiction, distinctive settings of city slum and waterfront life. Though hindered by a frequent lack of dramatic awareness, he produced, in sea scenes and a few others, local color dramatically utilized to further narrative action, and showed a realization of the possibilities of dynamic interrelation between setting and character moods and reactions.

A relatively minor figure, Mrs. Eliza Rowe, gave a new turn to the Addisonian usage of rural setting for background and in characterization. Showing a greater appreciation of nature and the extent to which it might be used in fiction than does any other author within the scope of this study, she brought out character traits and moods by detailing an individual's reaction to one locale when that individual was dominated by a mood created by a contrasting locale. Her desire for sentimental, moral conclusions, however, forced her to introduce much conventional romance and idyllicism, thus preventing her approach to a vital unified realism.

In Richardson's novels, varied, vital, setting techniques used by earlier writers are employed in effective combination for the first time. Richardson occasionally broke from his usual dependence on bare stage properties dramatically utilized and on linked place names accompanied by a minimum of description to give distinctive bits of local color as background or to set the

mood for the ensuing action, to use setting to reflect or to elicit reactions and comments indicative of character, and to employ setting dramatically in a fast-moving narrative to which it is essential. In working up to a dramatic incident, moreover, he sometimes used the same general locale over and over, each time adding slight touches descriptive of some of its different parts; and then utilized most of those details in one swift moving episode to which they were essential, in such a way as to give a final unity to that locale. This seems a major achievement. Furthermore, he occasionally built up, to vitalize his narrative, a setting with a more intense, interactive emotional tone than had any previous writer of prose fiction, a tone which colors the action and vivifies the characters. Finally, Richardson succeeded, incidentally, in giving the first fairly colorful picture of the exterior surroundings characteristic of upper middle-class English life.

Fielding, who was distrustful of extended descriptive setting and who depended to a great extent on the dramatic utilization of "stage property" setting (a technique of which he was complete master), appears to have regarded setting as valuable only so far as it could contribute directly to the progress of narration or characterization. Frequently, he intensified the earthy realism of his episodes by placing them in juxtaposition to a humorously heroic or a Gothic grave-yard setting, often giving his heroic personification of the time of day an earthy nature similar to that of the ensuing episode, or contrasting the heroic or Gothic with the everyday scene which followed; with him the mock-heroic reached its highest utility as a tool for realism. Moreover, he skillfully utilized recurrent locales to heighten and contrast different moods of the same character, thus making more convincing his character's reactions. He, as well as Richardson, employed the Addisonian technique of reflecting traits of character in setting. And he surpassed Bunyan, on occasion, in describing in realistic detail scenes symbolic of a state of mind. While his description of the English countryside is not extensive, he skillfully worked into his narrative sufficient brief touches of color to help authenticate it without impeding it, and to provide some dramatic intensification.

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The son of the Rev. Rowland Hill and Tina Elizabeth Hill, I was born at Westhampton, New York, on April 20, 1906. After being graduated from Adelphi Academy, Brooklyn, New York, I attended Dickinson College, receiving my A.B. in 1928. In June 1929 Boston University granted me the degree of Master of Arts. From 1929 to 1939 I was Instructor in English at Michigan State College. During these years I continued my graduate study in the summers at Columbia University and at Boston University. In June 1939, having resigned from my position at Michigan State, I resumed full-time study for the Ph.D. at Boston University. During the second semester of 1939-1940 I served as part-time Instructor in English at the Boston University College of Business Administration. Since February 1941 I have been Instructor in English at Long Island University in the Evening Session.



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